

THE TIMES

No. 1

MONDAY FEBRUARY 17 1997

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at 40 cinemas
nationwide

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the vital
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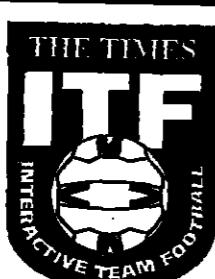
Your guide to key election issues:
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William Rees-Mogg



TOMORROW

PLAY THE £50,000 GAME



Interactive
Team Football
PLUS:
Libby Purves

WEDNESDAY

STYLE

Clementine Ribeiro
head for the
high street

PLUS
Nigella
Lawson
and
Alan
Coren

THURSDAY

BEST FOR BOOKS

Jeanette Winterson
falls for Edith Sitwell
PLUS Dr Thomas
Stuttaford's medical
briefing



FRIDAY

THE BRIT AWARDS

David Sinclair on why
pop is now young,
British and back

PLUS Tessa
Blackstone's
new
column

SATURDAY

COSTUME DRAMA

Helen Storey
celebrates
50 years
of British
fashion in
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Hogg buys Unionist vote with beef deal

BY JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

DOUGLAS HOGG will today announce the first steps towards lifting the beef ban in Northern Ireland in a blatant bid to enlist support from the Ulster Unionists in tonight's censure vote.

The Minister of Agriculture will disclose that the Government is to submit a scheme to Brussels within the next two weeks which, if approved, would allow beef from certified herds throughout the UK to be sold in Europe. Northern Ireland, which has the fewest cases of BSE, would be the first beneficiary.

Ministers denied that any deals were being done. But with all parties claiming a full turnout for the vote on the handling of the BSE crisis, the nine Ulster Unionists with just one Tory rebel could determine the Government's fate.

If they sided with the Opposition the vote would be tied at 322, although the Speaker's casting vote, by convention, would be for the Government.

If John Major is defeated, Tony Blair would be under enormous pressure to hold a no-confidence vote which, if lost, could trigger a general election. But yesterday the Ulster Unionists were keeping their cards close to their chest, insisting that they would press for further concessions.

Although it is now likely that they will abstain, one senior MP indicated that the submission of the scheme would not be enough.

He called on Mr Hogg to make a special case for the province, rather than advocating a UK-wide scheme. "We would need to have assurances that once the scheme has been approved, Britain should press for the specific lifting of the ban in Northern Ireland," he said. A spokesman for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, said that Mr Hogg would not give these assurances today but reiterated that Northern Ireland would be the first to benefit.

All nine Ulster Unionist MPs are now expected to attend the debate but a decision on which way they would vote would be taken at an earlier meeting.

John Taylor, deputy leader, hinted that further concessions were in the pipeline but refused to be drawn on what they were. "Just as we got the fishing quotas extended, I'm reasonably confident that two further advantages for Northern Ireland will emerge," Mr Taylor said. "We are making progress on a number of fronts."

Several Unionist MPs are also angry that Labour failed to consult them about the timing of the vote

Peter Riddell, page 18
Leading article, page 19



Wannabe a hit for the Treasury

BY QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK AND AUDREY MAGEE

BRITAIN'S balance of trade figures will be rosier next month thanks not to pig-iron or Welsh lamb but the Spice Girls, the chirrupy pop group that yesterday confirmed its global appeal by reaching the top of the American *Billboard* singles chart with *Wannabe*.

The five, Mel B, Victoria, Geri, Emma and Mel C, also took the number six spot in the *Billboard* album chart. These rankings indicate earnings of tens of millions of dollars, with more to come.

Advance word of their success began to leak out towards the end of last week, when Virgin, the Spice Girls' London-based record label, did its sums and realised that it had sold more than 700,000

copies of *Wannabe*, enough to top the soulful Toni Braxton from the top slot.

America may have been slower than Britain to embrace the girls' charms, but in financial terms the US market is the most important in the world. By going to number one the group has outperformed the likes of Oasis and Blur, and has also proved itself more instantly saleable to the American public than were the Beatles.

Figures released by the British Phonographic Industry show that record sales grew by 6.1 per cent in the United Kingdom last year, allowing Britain to bask in the success of groups like Manic Street Preachers and Oasis.

The music industry is now

worth £2.5 billion a year, generating more money for the economy than shipbuilding or electronic components. The market for singles is now larger than at any time since 1962.

Music has always generated wealth in Britain. At least 25 of the 1996 *Sunday Times* 500 top richest people in Britain are in pop music, including old-timers like Paul McCartney and Phil Collins.

But the money being talked about for the brash young things of the 1990s is astounding. The five members of the Spice Girls will earn £3 million each after their success in going to number one in America with their first record — something the Beatles did not manage.

Labour is drawing up plans to privatise the Tote, the state-owned betting business, in a move which could cost the racing industry £13 million. It is thought that a sale could raise £500 million to spend on health and education but Tony Blair's office said yesterday that the scheme was only under consideration.

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THE TIMES MONDAY FEBRUARY 17 1997

2 HOME NEWS

Contempt check on race-death accusation

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

THE Attorney-General is to consider whether the *Daily Mail* has committed contempt of court by naming five unconvicted men as the murderers of Stephen Lawrence. The announcement comes in response to former Master of the Rolls, Lord Donaldson, who said the newspaper had "without doubt" interfered with the course of justice by publishing pictures of the five on the front page on Friday.

The newspaper challenged the five to sue if it was wrong, after a jury ruled the 18-year-old was unlawfully killed in Eltham, south-east London, in a "completely unprovoked racist attack" by five white youths. Yesterday, in an interview on Radio 4's *Mediumwave*, Lord Donaldson called for the Attorney-General's intervention.

"Contempt of court has nothing to do with being rude to judges or anything. It is interfering with the system of justice. That is what the *Mail* has done," he said. "I would hope that the Attorney-General would refer the matter to the courts at the earliest possible opportunity, in order that the courts may consider whether this is a gross contempt."

A statement from the Attorney-General's office last night said that as there was no current court case, there could



Frances Lawrence called for inquiry



Hunt for girl's murderer

Continued from page 1

bedroom terraced house, which is opposite a park. The man with a scarred face called on at least one door in Lower Park Road, asking for accommodation. The man, who was white, about 5ft 10in tall with wavy hair, was carrying a Safeway plastic carrier bag with a stick of French bread.

"Whoever was responsible for this vicious and evil attack must have been stained with blood and probably with white paint on their clothes as well," Det Supt Paine said.

However, in another letter, Jonathan Caplan QC pointed out that the apparent finality of a verdict has often been challenged in the past in reverse, when newspapers have campaigned to rectify alleged miscarriages of justice.

Letters, page 19

tings in 1993. Billie-Jo's natural parents, who are separated, have been informed of her murder. Her mother is believed to live in Barking, while her father lives in Newham, east London.

Billie-Jo, who had a step-brother, was a friendly girl who adored her pet dog Buster and a collection of goldfish. She was a happy pupil at Helenswood Comprehensive School for Girls in Hastings, according to neighbours. Carl Crispin, who lives nearby, said: "She was very open and a bit of a leader — I think she was in the debating society at school."

In the weeks following

Christmas, Mr Jenkins became worried about powders

after seeing a man in Alexandra Park, who appeared to be staring intently across the road at the family home. Just 12 days ago, Mr Jenkins disturbed a man who was prowling in the garden at dusk.

Last year, more than 1,000 local residents signed a petition calling for better security in Alexandra Park, following reports of drug dealing and men "flashing" in the bushes.

Friends of the girl yesterday placed bunches of flowers outside her home. They said Billie-Jo was a vivacious, bright youngster with an energy and passion for life. Sarah Hillborg, 15, said: "If you were depressed, just looking at her would cheer you up."

Portillo to back £12bn defence projects

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

TWO defence programmes together worth £12 billion are expected to be approved before the general election.

An order for three advanced nuclear submarines and an agreement on the crucial next phase of the four-nation Eurofighter aircraft project are expected within a few weeks, according to defence sources. Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, is hoping to sign an agreement with Germany, Italy and Spain for the production investment phase of the Eurofighter combat aircraft in late March or early April.

A decision by all partners to invest in the production line equipment should lift any remaining doubts about Eurofighter's future, the sources said.

It will commit British Aerospace, prime contractor in this country, to spending about £2 billion setting up the production lines for Eurofighter, leading to an expected RAF order next year for 232 aircraft worth at least £8 billion. The cost to taxpayers will be more than £15 billion, including development.

There is now growing confidence that, after initial doubts, the German Cabinet will approve the production investment phase next month and that its decision will be ratified by the Parliament in Bonn.

On current plans, Germany would buy 180 Eurofighters, Italy 120 and Spain 87. Each Eurofighter will cost about £35 million and the first ones will be in service by 2001 or 2002.

Agreement on Eurofighter and a £2 billion order for three Batch 2 Trafalgar class nuclear submarines from GEC-Marconi will give Mr Portillo political ammunition in the lead-up to the election.

The Eurofighter deal will provide 14,000 jobs at the peak of production, and the submarine contract will safeguard jobs at VSEL, the shipbuilding firm at Barrow-in-Furness in Cumbria, which was taken over by GEC.

Labour has always supported the Eurofighter programme, which is likely to remain untouched by its plans to review all aspects of defence spending if elected.

May 1 election 'is officially' confirmed

It's official: the general election will be on May 1. The Northern Ireland Office's Chief Electoral Officer, wrote to MPs last night to tell them where all the polling stations will be. At the top of each sheet it said: "Parliamentary Election 1/5/97."

Last night Tory officials swiftly brushed aside the claim, blaming a "clerical error" by election officers. Joe Hendron, SDLP MP for West Belfast, said: "I feel that it is probably a gaffe by the electoral officers, but it is quite clear that they have been notified of the date."

Tories plan gun Bill rebellion

More than 50 Tory MPs are planning to vote against the Government when ministers try to overturn in the Commons tomorrow the defeats suffered by the Firearms (Amendment) Bill in the House of Lords. The Bill, introduced after the Dunblane tragedy, would ban all handguns above 22 calibre. Labour is allowing its MPs a free vote, but most will join the Government in the division lobbies.

North faces gale battering

Severe gale-force winds are predicted over northern England, Scotland and Northern Ireland today and tomorrow. The London Weather Centre said last night that the winds could reach up to 60 mph in exposed places, causing possible damage to trees and buildings. A spokesman said: "Driving conditions could become hazardous and drivers should take extra care until Tuesday afternoon."

Forecast, page 22

Embassy claims immunity

The American Embassy in London has claimed state immunity to block a victimisation action, to be heard today, by a woman who was sacked from her job and sexually harassed. Mary Fogarty, 36, was awarded £12,000 by an industrial tribunal after she lost her embassy job as an administrative assistant when she complained about her boss making obscene remarks and licking her ear. She has subsequently been rejected for seven posts at the embassy.

Caesarean ruling challenged

A woman who had a Caesarean section against her wishes will lodge a ground-breaking challenge this week over courts' powers to approve surgery without the woman being legally represented. The woman, who does not wish to be identified, will tomorrow seek leave to bring a judicial review of the hospital who detained her under the Mental Health Act 1983 and then obtained a court order to deliver her baby by Caesarean section.

IRA survivor suffers shock

The woman who narrowly escaped death as Lance Bombardier Stephen Restorick was shot by an IRA sniper in Bessbrook, Co Armagh, has cancelled an appearance on today's *Richard and Judy* television show after suffering delayed shock. The bullet grazed Lorraine McElroy, 35, above her left eye. Her husband Tony said that she was now under sedation but still hoped to attend the soldier's funeral and stay with his parents in Peterborough.

NHS trust to be wound up

The first national health trust to go out of business is expected to close this autumn. Anglian Harbours NHS Trust, set up in 1991 in Great Yarmouth, has failed to win enough contracts from health authorities and GP fundholders. Its assets and services will be inherited by neighbouring trusts. There are likely to be 150 redundancies among the 1,600 employees. Two more national health trusts are predicted to fold this year.

Sheep dip 'caused shooting'

A farmer serving 12 years in jail for attempted murder for shooting a labourer will this week plead to have his sentence set aside on the grounds that he was mentally unbalanced by sheep-dip poisoning. The retrial of Robert Billings, in his early 60s, of Warmingfield, West Sussex, was granted by Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, and starts tomorrow in Lewes Crown Court.

Broadmoor porn inquiry

An inquiry has begun after the discovery of pornographic videos at Broadmoor psychiatric hospital in Berkshire. The tapes, believed to contain child pornography, were found less than a week after the Government ordered a judicial inquiry into alleged paedophile activity at Ashworth Hospital on Merseyside. A search for further pornographic material is continuing at Broadmoor.

Skier hurt in collision

A British businessman who works in Germany was injured when he collided with a party of Austrian skiers with no legs whose instructor lost control while strapped to a monoski. Anthony Dunstone, 52, from Haydon, Middlesex, suffered back injuries and damaged a kidney in the accident at the resort of Laax, southern Austria, on Saturday. His wife and young son were with him.

Degree exam included nine-year-old A-level question

Continued from page 1
three questions students had to answer was one from a 1988 A-level computer science examination.

Last month's examination was for second-year students who had completed part of a modular degree that counted towards the final grade. The students are at South Thames College in Wandsworth, south London, which teaches the degree's first two years under a franchise arrangement with the university.

Modular courses, where students construct a degree from a dozen or more pass-ass-you-go units in a variety of subjects, have been criticised for jeopardising standards. Critics say subjects cannot be covered in as great a depth.



SOUTH THAMES COLLEGE
A LEVEL COMPUTER SCIENCE

1988

QUESTION PAPER

The American Association

Resistance to HIV discovered in two infected men

REPORTS FROM NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR, IN SEATTLE

TWO men who recovered after being infected by the Aids virus HIV are giving scientists clues that could lead to better treatments for the disease.

The cases were described by Professor Miles Cloyd of the University of Texas at Galveston at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

He believes that the ability to shrug off the infection documented in these two cases may explain why many haemophiliacs and intravenous drug users remain free of HIV infection despite exposure to the virus. He has shown that the resistance is the result of a gene found in as many as one in six people.

However, protection is limited to one strain of HIV, not all varieties of the virus.

Well-documented cases of recovery are very rare, and several involve babies born to HIV-infected women in which there are doubts that the babies were ever really infected. Professor Cloyd says that his data is the strongest evidence yet in adults.

In one case, a man living with an HIV-positive partner was infected with HIV, which was demonstrated both by antibody tests and by detecting the viral genes using a sensitive technique called polymerase chain reaction (PCR).

When he was tested again four months later he proved clear and he was checked for a further 18 months with no sign

of infection. The immune-system cells of these men were tested against the same strain of HIV in a test tube and found to be relatively resistant to them.

They could be infected, but only by large doses. Further experiments showed that the virus was entering the cells but was then unable to copy itself and its advance was halted.

The results suggest that people possessing the newly found form of resistance block

HIV at a step in the virus's life cycle called integration, when the virus inserts a DNA copy of its genetic blueprint into the host's genetic material, or when fresh viral ribonucleic acid (RNA) is made from the inserted DNA.

The process is quite different from that of another natural mechanism to block infection, reported last year, and appears to be twice as common in the population.

When Professor Cloyd tested the ability of HIV to reproduce in immune cells taken from 50 healthy volunteers, he found that one in six were resistant.

He also found that the resistance was shared by different members of families in a way which showed that it was attributable to a gene. In families where one parent was susceptible and the other resistant to a particular HIV strain, children were like the father or the mother. In families where both parents were susceptible, so were the children.

The strain of HIV used in the experiments and found in the two patients who recovered is one usually transmitted by blood transfusion or by sharing needles, not by sex.

"We can't say for certain whether this process accounts for real-life cases where someone was exposed to HIV but didn't get sick, but I think it does," Professor Cloyd said.

"If we can figure out how these genes can stop infection or the disease, it may be possible to make a drug that will mimic the effect."

Supertasters find good health hard to swallow

SUPERTASTERS — people who are particularly sensitive to bitter tastes — may be harming themselves by avoiding fruit and vegetables that contain health-giving but bitter compounds.

A study at the University of Michigan presented at the conference has shown that about a quarter of women fall into that category, while another quarter were non-tasters, blind to bitter flavours. Supertasters have more taste buds than average, experience tastes more strongly and have greater sensitivity to pain and to the "mouth-feel" of food. They find chili peppers and fair creamer.

Dr Adam Drewnowski, director of the human nutrition

programme at Michigan, said: "Supertasters are highly sensitive to bitter taste and tend to reject bitter-tasting foods. Many anti-oxidant flavonoids that are so important for cancer prevention are either bitter or occur in bitter-tasting vegetables and fruit."

After treating 400 women volunteers with a bitter laboratory compound he found that those who rejected its taste disliked sharp and bitter foods in general, including naringin, a compound that is the principal bitter ingredient in grapefruit juice.

Like other flavonoids, naringin helps inhibit cancer-causing compounds in the body and has potential chemotherapeutic value," he said.

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BALLOT '97

THE TIMES GUIDE TO ELECTION ISSUES

5. Higher education

Degree of silence on a £6 billion problem

THIS page is devoted to an issue not likely to feature in the television soundbites, poster themes and headlines which define the colour and content of a general election campaign.

Considering the stakes involved, the omission is odd. Britain's sprawling university network costs more than £6 billion a year to run and we are the only major country in the world devoting as much as a fifth of the nation's education budget to higher education. But the major political parties some time ago reached a tacit agreement that a committee of inquiry into the scope, funding and purpose of our university system would not report until this summer. Sir Ron Dearing, once chairman of the Post Office and now the Government's education guru of choice in time of

trouble, will not render judgment until June.

Political debate about higher education is suffocated by a taboo which has long since ceased to inhibit those who actually run and teach university courses. After two decades of rising student numbers, inadequate public funds and amalgamation with what were once polytechnics, universities are facing hard choices over how they generate income from sources other than the Exchequer. University vice-chancellors have said that they may require students to contribute towards the cost of their tuition as well as their maintenance.

Vice-chancellors may confront this, but political parties back away. The possibility of middle-class backlash against paying fees for their children's university tu-

ition generates powerful political phobia. On the fundamental question of whether university teaching should or should not remain free to most students, the division is not between the parties but between Westminster and academe.

While tip-toeing round tuition fees, both main opposition parties have produced schemes for financing student maintenance which involve students paying more towards their own upkeep. Labour suggests sweeping up present loans and maintenance grants into a single loan which would be repaid by graduates over perhaps 15 to 20 years. This version of a "graduate tax" would lengthen the five-year repayment schedule for current loans. The Liberal Democrats would establish individual Learning Accounts financed

at a basic level by the State but which would allow students to borrow additional sums.

For the foreseeable future, higher education policy will emerge from the tension between quantity and quality. Whatever the precise boundary between public and private finance, governments will set at least the broad standards which define degree courses and influence the proportion of the population which can take them by setting the extent of subsidy available.

Balancing quantity and quality requires a view about what universities are for. The election of 1979 inaugurated a fresh search for evidence on how much higher education contributed to the na-

tional wealth, social mobility or general happiness. Researchers set off into the jungle of statistics and prejudices but have not yet returned with clear conclusions. For the first time since the Robbins Report of the 1960s, Sir Ron Dearing has been charged with imposing some order on the chaos.

In the absence of agreement about how many graduates Britain needs, instincts prevail. Arguments for shrinking higher education are not heard: differences are between standing still and expansion. Weary of the struggle to wean students and their parents off public funds and still coping with the consequences of a surge in numbers, the Government is trying to check the expansion, arguing that demand for graduates is slackening. Labour, quoting the 60 per cent

university participation rates in America, says that many more people deserve the chance to go to university and that the money can be found from a new version of the ailing student loan scheme.

Many university teachers would say that government faces more urgent issues. The abolition of the distinction between polytechnics and universities has left the country with a mass higher education framework co-existing with an older, smaller, elite system. At one end of the scale stand Oxford, Cambridge and the most powerful civic campuses; at the other stand struggling institutions still not much more than what one of John Le Carré's characters calls "polyts in drag".

Sir William Taylor, former Vice-Chancellor of Hull, starkly describes the system as "out of control". Most rational planning suggests that the bigger the higher education sector becomes, the more varied its universities must be in specialisation, quality and quantity of research, prestige, sources of finance and character. British universities show a persistent wish to imitate elite success. Universities ill-equipped to do so try to ape the great seats of learning by embarking on ambitious research and spreading their resources too widely. The new trend, which concentrates the bulk of research funds among a small fraction of Britain's 97 universities, has given rise to claims that an elite "Ivy League" is being assembled by stealth and the arrival of "Ivy League aangs" in less well-endowed institutions.

High price paid for university expansion

THE RECORD

DURING the past 18 years, higher education has undergone revolutionary change which can be captured in a single statistic. In 1979, one young person in eight went through university; nowadays almost one youngster in three does so. The academic grove was once the preserve of a small élite and is no longer.

The debates and decisions of the past 18 years have been dominated by the Government's determination to curb the rise in the cost of universities and the dawning realisation that a system split between polytechnics and universities did not work. The next phase of decision-making must cope with the consequences, both intended and unintended, of merging the two kinds of institutions. And as government has radically altered the structure of the university system and shrunk its public funds, students and their demands have changed.

Women, traditionally under-represented at universities, now make up almost half the student body. There are now almost as many part-time, mainly mature students as young entrants to full-time degree courses. But universities remain a middle-class preserve: students from what opinion pollsters call occupational classes D and E are hardly more likely to take a degree than they were ten years ago.

The Further and Higher Education Act of 1992 allowed 41 polytechnics and colleges to retitle themselves as universities. Doubling the number of universities has increased the range of choice for individual students but centralised control of the entire sector. When Margaret Thatcher came to power in 1979, university funding was centrally controlled by the now-defunct University Grants Committee, but polytechnics were run by local authorities. Now the Higher Education Funding Council for England holds the purse strings of the whole system. Higher education has been nationalised.

The most consistent charge levelled at government ministers throughout these years has been the impoverishment

Sir Ron is said to be tempted



Elevation of the polytechnics has left a small, élite system co-existing with a mass higher education framework

of teaching institutions. While the exact effects may be in dispute, the financial squeeze was very plainly laid out by a group of university administrators and Whitehall civil servants reporting to the Secretary of State for Education last summer. In the past eight years alone, while public funding for universities and colleges has increased by 25 per cent in real terms, the expansion of student numbers has cut funding per student by 30 per cent, with a further 10 per cent cut due over the next two years. Funds from charities and industry have made up little of the gap.

The average student-to-staff ratio ten years ago was about 10:1; last year it had risen to 16:1 and the report cites universities claiming ratios of 20:1 and 25:1. The report highlights the points where the system is under greatest strain: shortages of medical equipment and places, out-of-date information technology and problems keeping libraries stocked. The CBI last year underlined the need for students to learn basic skills of communication, teamwork and problem-solving which they fear will suffer as the amount of face-to-face teaching declines.

Fourteen years ago, the idea of student loans generated bitterly acrimonious division and hopes for rescuing higher education from ceaseless arguments over money. The controversies have died and the hopes have been dashed. A Tory government has suffered the political embarrassment of going into the banking business and the managerial embarrassment of failing to privatisate the operation. The Student Loans Company has outstanding loans of more than £1 billion and has told the National Audit Office that £142 million is unlikely to be recovered. Banks are extremely wary of getting involved.

Both main political parties would love Sir Ron Dearing's committee to present them with a workable proposal to replace the loans fiasco.

Sir Ron is said to be tempted

by the examples of Australia and Japan. Australian student loans are made by a government fund to which employers contribute voluntarily. Students also pay some of their tuition fee. They can pay this in advance, or after their course through the taxation system, giving them longer than the steep five-year repayments for British loans. The Japanese Government has created more entry and exit points in its system. Japanese students have to pay substantial course fees, without help from a government loan scheme, for a four-year degree at university. They can also take two-year college degrees and go on to university for a further two years for a full honours degree.

Education officials in Britain have expressed interest in combining the approaches: state funding for two years of study with loans being easier to make and repay when students are well established on courses and keen to complete their degrees.

Cost and quantity are relatively straightforward to audit; judgments about quality are more elusive. By one crude measure of quantity, Britain had more graduates per head

of population than any country in the European Union except Denmark when the OECD last counted in 1992, although both Japan and America had still more. A system to rate universities for their research has led to complaints that academic quality cannot be compared across disciplines and that emphasising numbers of publications leads to more books and articles of lower quality and less time devoted to teaching pupils. Can the don taking a tutorial in Aristotelian philosophy at Oxford be directly compared to the lecturer teaching "golf course management" at the University of the West of England?

Worry about standards is diffuse but persistent. The Department for Education and the universities are still wrangling about the creation of a "quality agency" and the measurement of both teaching and research remains individual and controversial — not least because some academics refuse to accept that they do something which can be calibrated at all. University authorities resent the lowering of A-level standards which requires them to teach students who should still be at school.

Despite the small numbers

of A-level students taking mathematics and science combinations, universities expanded their places for these subjects. They found them hard to fill and some were forced to take under-qualified students. Apart from the problem of finding enough mathematics and science teachers, there is

not much evidence of a shortfall where people are needed for science-based careers. The moral of the story seems to be that universities find it hard to reshape people's choices in line with the economy's demands.

But the helter-skelter expansion of universities will have its own effect on choices. An unprecedentedly large number of students is being sucked into a higher education system that has never closed a weak university, when funds and energy might be better concentrated on further education and vocational courses. Technical further education, ever the Cinderella of the British education system, might be the truly deserving beneficiary of savings made by charging students for tuition.

With degrees no longer a

rarity, white-collar employers must find other ways to select their employees. Possession of a degree is no longer something special. That is perhaps the deepest and most lasting change of the past 18 years: universities have gained a lot of students and lost much of their magic.

Next week: social security

CONSERVATIVES



Vision: higher education raises workforce skills, brings benefits to the economy, has wider social and cultural benefit and promotes individual and personal development.

Numbers: demand for graduates will be outstripped by supply in the year 2000. Numbers of people in higher education should also be influenced by "rate of return to the nation's investment". Awaiting guidance from Dearing on whether student numbers should grow, and if so by how much, after next three years of stable numbers.

Student grants and loans: charging for tuition ruled out. Balance between grants and loans for maintenance being shifted further towards loans.

University finance: money per student to drop to 72 per cent of 1990-91 level by 1999.

LABOUR



Vision: 21st-century societies require high-skill workforces developed by increased access to universities. Economic prosperity and social justice demand no less.

Numbers: raise the country's sights to the CBI target of 40 per cent of young people taking degrees. America's 60 per cent and Korea's aim of 100 per cent. Government underestimates demand.

Student grants and loans: replace present mixture of grants and loans with a graduate contribution scheme. Risks for collection of student repayments will be transferred to private sector to keep the expenditure out of the public sector borrowing requirement.

University finance: levels to be agreed with funding councils. Campuses deserve better staff-student ratios, computers and libraries.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS



Vision: expand access to degree courses without damaging quality. Match Japanese, American and German graduate output. System should adapt to a "lifelong learning culture".

Numbers: should follow demand. Students from EU and central Europe to be particularly encouraged.

Student grants and loans: Individual Learning Accounts financed by the State could be topped up by loans to be paid back later. Parental contribution to be abolished and support to be extended to all students, whether full- or part-time and in both higher and further education.

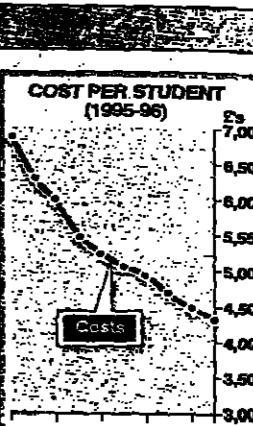
University finance: levels to be agreed with funding councils. Campuses deserve better staff-student ratios, computers and libraries.

We have done two things that, taken together, will prove a sensible blow to the quality of our higher education: we have tripled the number of students without the number of teachers, and we have expanded universities on the basis of inadequate schools.

George Weiden, MP

The solution is, as many in all political parties are beginning to recognise, to денationalise the funding of higher education, to abolish the Higher Education Funding Councils and to establish a direct link between the students to which they pay and the institutions to which they pay them.

John Ashworth, former director, London School of Economics



ating: a total of 20,000 people. By the following year, the figure was down to 10 per cent as the economy came out of recession.

Albanian leader orders riot police to allow protests

BY RICHARD OWEN

PRESIDENT BERISHA of Albania, who has aroused international concern by cracking down on protests over fraudulent "pyramid" savings schemes, appeared to change tack at the weekend. He admitted that his Government had made "mistakes" and ordered police to allow demonstrations in provinces "without hindrance".

Mr Berisha, addressing supporters in the ruling Democratic Party, said many of the deflated investors had only themselves to blame, but conceded that the Government had also been naive. "We have learnt a hard lesson in free-market economics," he said. "We are new to democracy."

Greek Army bars way to migrants

FROM JAMES PITTIFER IN KAPSTICA

HIGH up here in the mountains on the Greek-Albanian border, the Greek Army is starting the "Balkan Plan" to close the border to illegal immigrants, and block passage to the thousands of Albanians who are starting to move south towards Greece.

The "Balkan Plan" was leaked from the Greek Foreign Office this week, and is designed to seal the 7,500-mile border from Turkey to Albania, but the remote terrain and sheer numbers of people are likely to make it difficult. The Greek police have had roadblocks in operation for a long while, but they often function lethargically. The army will be a tougher nut to crack, and troops on road patrol are beginning to make their presence felt.

Many migrants are victims of Albania's collapsed pyramid schemes and feel they have little choice but to go south.

At the moment, migrant numbers are in their thousands, not the tens of thousands everyone expects when the spring comes and the

and capitalism." The President, criticised by some for reverting to authoritarian Balkan ways since his election in 1992 after the collapse of communism, said it had been an error to use force against protesters, and people "should be allowed to demonstrate freely".

He expressed sympathy with the "hundreds of thousands" who had lost their savings and even their homes, but said a "minority" was trying to "turn this big, but not irreparable, loss into a national tragedy". He also made clear that the Government, while refunding savers from frozen pyramid funds, would not supplement this with state

cash. "We will not take this debt on our shoulders," he said. "No democratic government would do so. It would amount to printing money, which in turn would fuel hyper-inflation."

As the President spoke, tensions remained high in Tirana, the capital, where opposition leaders have been banned from holding protests in Skanderbeg Square in the heart of the city and at the football stadium. A police presence prevented a planned demonstration in Tirana yesterday, with police clearing cafés around Skanderbeg Square to ensure that protesters did not gather there.

Mr Berisha accused the leaders of the Socialists, the former Communists, of trying to exploit the savings revolt for their own ends. In Fier and in the nearby port of Vlore, scene of some of the worst violence, thousands marched yesterday to demand their money back. In Fier the crowd carried Petro Foci, the local Socialist leader, on its shoulders. He told them that there was "war between Fier and Berisha", and that although the Government maintained the protest was purely economic "they know it is political too, and we will win".

In Vlore, police who had deserted the port after riots a week ago which left three people dead returned at the weekend, but kept their distance from the crowd. No riot police were visible.

Opposition leaders said they believed the Democratic Party had recruited "paramilitary" vigilantes, including recently released criminals, to attack or intimidate protesters, because many ordinary policemen had lost money in the pyramid schemes and were therefore "unreliable". The Defence Ministry said the reports were "malicious".

At least a third of Albania's 3.5 million people are thought to have invested all they had in the pyramid schemes, many of them run by the country's best known post-communist businessmen, in the naive hope of earning returns of up to 100 per cent.



Relaunched Northern League still lacks Italians' support

BY RICHARD OWEN

UMBERTO BOSSI, leader of the Northern League, tried to relaunch his secessionist movement at the weekend by adopting a softer, less aggressive image after last autumn's misjudged — and poorly received — "Declaration of Independence" in Venice.

But opinion polls suggested that Signor Bossi's revamped "consensual secessionism" still lacked broad support among Northern Italians. Known for his fiery rhetoric and unpredictable behaviour, he told the Northern League's annual congress, in Milan,

that a "referendum" on April 20 would decide whether Italians in the North wanted to form a breakaway state of "Padania". But government officials said that it would be only a League opinion poll.

Signor Bossi said that national media polls were biased against the League. He was clearly stung by one in *Corriere della Sera*, published in Milan, which said that 80 per cent of those questioned believed that should remain "single and indivisible". Seventy-five per cent also thought Signor Bossi

"not the right man to lead the North" in any federalized Italy.

In front of a poster showing a missile marked "Padania" emerging from a swamp, Signor Bossi told delegates that Italy was finished, adding: "We have to get out of here."

Romano Prodi, the Italian Prime Minister, said the League remained a serious threat to Italian unity. The Government's answer lay in its attempt to join the European single currency with its "measured" programme of federalism, devolving more power to the regions.

Debris theory will not alter thrust of prosecution in Senna death trial

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

FRANK WILLIAMS and two other members of the Formula One Williams team go on trial in Bologna this week over the death of Ayrton Senna, the Brazilian racing champion. The hearing is beginning amid claims that Senna may have crashed because his car hit debris on the track rather than because a steering column weld snapped, as the prosecution alleges.

Italian trials of this kind have been known to continue on and off for months, even years, only to be followed by long appeals. Mr Williams is charged with "culpable homicide", a charge often brought in Italy when someone is thought to have contributed to another's death "through negligence or fault". If convicted, he is likely to receive a suspended prison sentence of a year. The maximum sentence is five years.

Senna, driving a Williams Renault, hit the concrete wall of the track on May 1, 1994, after taking the Tamburello bend at 192mph. He suffered fatal head injuries when the steering column and front suspension arm pierced his helmet, and died in Bologna's main hospital.

Team members say that he was unusually tense on the day of the race, partly because he was being challenged by Michael Schumacher (driving for Benetton), partly because of tensions with his family over his girlfriend, Adriane Galistei, and partly because he was deeply upset by the death of the Austrian driver Roland Ratzenberger, whose car hit the track wall at 200mph during a qualifying race.



Senna: unusually tense on the day he was killed

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Peasants' revolt in Passau sows more seeds of euro doubt

Conventional wisdom holds that the big event in Germany last week was the astounding rise in unemployment. However much soul-searching those figures may have provoked, a mood change occurred in the Bavarian town of Passau which may have a still more profound bearing on the future.

Every Ash Wednesday, members of the regional ruling party, the Christian Social Union, gather in halls and tents to hear rousing speeches from their leaders while they sink colossal flagons of beer. Audiences have always been respectful and



deferential to the party chairman – until this year. Theo Waigel, the German Finance Minister and CSU leader, had to be slipped into the Nibelungen Hall in Passau by a side entrance. His

speech was punctuated by boos and whistles. Something is upsetting those plump and usually placid Bavarian farmers. That something is change.

The men of Passau expect their politicians to protect them from upheaval, but the truth that they face a rolling economic revolution is slowly dawning. Last week's anger was generated by tax and pension reform dictated by the need for Germany to squeeze its deficit to qualify for the single currency. Looking further ahead, the farmers also see their subsidies falling under pressure from world trade rules and

because support will have to be spread thinner as countries such as Poland and Hungary join the EU.

The once-reassuring EU plans to replace the mark with the euro. Some Bavarians fear that the new money will be worth less. Others, like the men and women who make BMWs outside Munich, worry that the euro will be strong enough to hit car sales to non-euro countries like Italy. What few people in Germany or anywhere else have grasped is that the single currency will also start another wave of labour market deregulation and welfare state shrinkage. The single

currency plainly requires a matching "economic government" to work. Whether or not the single-currency states get together joint foreign policies (highly unlikely), harmonise tax rates (probable) or organise a carbon energy tax (improbable), one kind of "political union" will materialise instantly.

The success of failure of the euro, as Professor David Currie points out in an Economist Intelligence Unit paper released today, will depend on whether the EU tackles "reform of fiscal, welfare and labour market arrangements to re-

move undue rigidities in the European economies". That is a polite way of saying that present job security and welfare levels must fall to keep the euro flying, because no other remedy will be available.

Once the euro is launched, pressures to make the zone's markets work more efficiently will become acute. No European politician believes that wages can be reduced to keep ailing firms competitive – although a German metalworkers' leader broke with precedent last week and suggested just that. Citizens of the euro zone will not do as the American unemployed

do: move to where the jobs are. Workers in the EU have actually become less mobile in recent years.

French and Germans, in particular, show no inclination to look for work in a different region or country. Loathing of free-market economics is rising again in France. One gloomy tract against globalisation, *The Economic Horror*, has become a surprise bestseller. Two quite different conclusions can be drawn. The first is heard as an argument for British entry to the single currency: that in joining a deregulating Rhineland

GEORGE BROCK

French elite steps up fight against immigration law

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

A PROTEST launched by French film-makers last week in defiance of stringent immigration laws has snowballed into a full-scale anti-government rebellion involving many prominent members of France's intellectual elite.

Sculptors, doctors, writers and painters are among those backing the call for a campaign of civil disobedience against a Bill further tightening tough 1993 immigration legislation. It requires citizens to report the arrival and departure of foreigners staying in their homes without residence papers.

More than 400 French actors, including actresses Catherine Deneuve and Jeanne Moreau, yesterday joined the growing ranks of the protesters, which already include 300 writers, 400 senior theatrical figures, 700 psychoanalysts and 1,200 journalists and lawyers. Today 50 cartoonists and artists will publish drawings in the left-wing *Libération* newspaper attacking immigration policies.

The revolt began last Wednesday when 59 film-makers, including only a handful of household names, published a statement demanding to be prosecuted. "We are guilty, every one of us, of putting up illegal foreign residents recently... we ask to be investigated and put on trial," the film directors wrote,

campaign has evolved quickly into a wider row over immigration and the advance of the National Front, taking the Government by surprise.

Guy Sorman, a writer and adviser to Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, said in a television interview on Friday that the laws requiring the reporting of illegal immigrants might have to be amended. He was immediately contradicted by government officials. A spokesman for the ruling Gaullist party said: "All local politicians know that residence permits are behind much of the illegal immigration afflicting France."

In an article for the *Journal du Dimanche* newspaper yesterday, M. Debré insisted that the protesters were "trying to stir up emotions by falsely raising the notion of informing on others", compared by critics to wartime legislation under the Vichy regime.

The objective is to aid the struggle against illegal immigration and to reinforce the means by which we can tackle the real underground network of illegal immigration that exists in France," M. Juppé said.

■ **Vitrolles:** Several hundred left-wing demonstrators massed at the town hall here yesterday when the National Front officially took control and elected Catherine Méret, wife of the party's number two, as Mayor. (Reuters)



Deneuve, left, and Moreau joining disobedience call



Albright optimistic on future of Russia

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

THE US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, said yesterday that America was not concerned about the future of Russia despite President Yeltsin's state of health because there were other Kremlin leaders dedicated to democracy and the free market.

Ms Albright arrived in Rome yesterday at the start of an 11-nation tour as part of consultations in the run-up to the Nato summit in Madrid in June, which is to confront the vexed issue of Nato's eastward expansion. Liberal Russian leaders such as Andrei Kozyrev, the former Foreign Minister, have said that absorption of former Communist countries, such as Poland and Hungary, against the wishes of Russia would strengthen "nationalistic and militaristic forces" in the Kremlin.

Ms Albright, dubbing her tour of European capitals the "Albright Express", briskly dismissed such arguments in talks with Romano Prodi, the Italian Prime Minister, and Lamberto Dini, the Foreign Minister. She will visit Bonn, Paris, Brussels and London before arriving in Moscow on Thursday.

The Secretary of State said it was "very important for both the Europeans and the Russians to understand that we are into a new era. It is no longer an adversarial relationship with Russia." She said that President Yeltsin, who is to meet President Clinton in Helsinki next month, had played an important role in reforming Russia. "Both Clinton and his senior officials were in close touch with other leaders who shared reformist values."

■ New strategist, page 18
■ Leading article, page 19

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Car theft rivals drugs in world crime earnings

BY OLIVER AUGUST

ORGANISED car theft is now as big an international problem as drug smuggling, according to a survey by a London-based group.

Russian crime syndicates have developed networks to transport vehicles from Europe to the former Soviet Union. About 25 per cent of foreign-made cars on the streets of Moscow are believed to have their cars stolen.

Ms Wassener, European analyst at the Control Risks Group, said: "Car theft is an international plague that costs billions of pounds every year... if car theft was a legitimate business, it would rank fifth worldwide among the Fortune 500 companies."

Moscow criminals can earn up to £1 million on a single luxury car. They sell them below market value, wait a few days and steal them back from the buyers who, knowing from the price they bought a stolen car, will not report the theft to police. Gangs can repeat this trick up to 30 times on a single car.

Ms Wassener said: "Vehicle theft is one of the easiest ways of making money... while prostitutes and casino operators need a property to ply their trade, the thieves just stroll the streets and steal."

The crime syndicates are split between Russians and Chechens, Moscow's arch-enemies in the Caucasus. The gangs are said to have expanded from their traditional activities such as drug-running into car-dealing by combining the two. They use the stolen cars to ferry drugs across Europe and then sell the cars

afterwards, effectively profit twice.

According to the survey, the number of stolen vehicles has quadrupled in parts of Europe since the collapse of communism. In Poland, where car theft rose by 20 per cent in 1993, a top presidential aide and the Interior Minister's wife had their cars stolen.

Ms Wassener said: "In large East European and former Soviet cities, there is a great demand for foreign-made cars, which are seen as status symbols. This is the incentive."

Tokyo: A spate of car thefts in the Japanese capital since the new year has led to the setting up of the nation's first car crime unit (Robert Whymann writes). Japan's cities have the lowest crime rate of leading industrialised nations and remarkably few vehicle thefts. Police called the thefts "unprecedented".

But it is the well-organised networks of criminal gangs across the continent which provide the means. Some criminal gangs started off stealing cars before extending their activities to other forms of crime."

Peter Kochler, a German crime expert, believes that many car owners are being persuaded by criminals to sell their cars to them, then report them as stolen to collect the insurance. "We estimate that in up to 50 per cent of all cases, the owner of the vehicle is involved."

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doubt

Albright
optimism
on future
of Russia

Desperate Zaire businessmen plan to privatise army

FROM SAM KILEY IN KINSHASA

PRIVATE businessmen in Zaire's richest province of Shaba are planning to pay their own army to recapture strategic towns lost to rebels over the past month in a desperate attempt to improve morale and prevent a coup.

The businessman, at the centre of the plan said yesterday that he had managed to raise £37,000 in pledges from fellow entrepreneurs in Lubumbashi, the capital of Shaba province.

"This could be our last chance. If we cannot motivate some soldiers to try to take back towns they have lost, then the army will remain humiliated and we can kiss the region goodbye. If the rebels took Shaba, land rich in cobalt, copper, gold and diamonds, they would control the whole economy," he said.

The man, who is close to President Mobutu's family, last night met Nawa, the President's adopted son, to try to enlist his support for the scheme. "We would hope to raise about 500 well-motivated and well-led volunteers who could then be sent, with the support of helicopters, against the rebels. It is vital that the

army wins at least one battle, even if only a bargaining chip with the rebels later on," the businessman said. He refused to say what such a force's first objective would be. But the rebels' most important hold-

ing in Shaba is the port, airport and railway station at Kalemie on Lake Tanganyika.

Talks must be opened with the rebel forces so that brother can stop killing brother

The salary of an ordinary soldier in the Zairean Army was raised from about £5 to about £6 a month over the weekend, after members of the civil guard looted Kinshasa's central market. But no pay is reaching frontline soldiers who are short of ammunition and have not received any rations in months. "You can- not expect people to go into

battle when they, naturally, ask themselves, 'For whom? Why? And what with?'" said the businessman behind the attempt to privatise Zaire's armed forces.

The initiative came as the country's 70,000-man army continued to crumble and disaffected junior officers talked of purging the Government and senior military ranks and forcing President Mobutu into exile.

At least 150 soldiers, half-starved and humiliated by rebel victories over the past three months, have been pouring into military camps in Kinshasa from the front line, more than 1,000 miles away. Some found their way to Kinshasa by boat along the Congo. Others hijacked lorries and bush taxis or came in by air. None had a good word to say for their Government.

Many were glad to express support for Laurent Kabila, the leader of the rebels. One second lieutenant in his unit had fought at Bunia on the border with Uganda last year. "William", well-educated and articulate, had walked 800 miles from there to Isiro, where he caught a plane to Kinshasa. There another to

Kisangani, then another to Kisangani. The harrowing experience of battlefield defeat and humiliating retreat through the forest has angered his junior officer comrades. "There must be a change of government. Mobutu must go into exile or retire. If this does not happen and our comrades in the field



Some of the 15,000 Zairean youths newly recruited into the rebel forces sing while on exercise in Kalemie

are not paid, fed, armed and properly led, there will be a curfew in Kinshasa and we will clean out all the ministers and anyone above the rank of major. There is very little time," he said. "Talks must be opened with the rebels, so that brother can stop killing brother," he added. "William" said that he did not give the Gov-

ernment more than a week, "two at the most", before young officers took the law into their own hands.

His rage is understandable. The first ten people we killed were DSP soldiers trying to get on our plane with their goodies. Later we went into the town itself and had to kill another ten. There was total chaos," he said.

He was flown into Bunia in November as members of the "elite" division went on a looting rampage in the town.

"The first ten people we killed were DSP soldiers trying to get on our plane with their goodies. Later we went into the town itself and had to kill another ten. There was total chaos," he said.

Gore 'very moved' by visit to Mandela's island jail cell

FROM AFP
IN CAPE TOWN

AL GORE, the American Vice-President, yesterday visited the jail cell on Robben Island where President Mandela spent 18 of his 27 years behind bars. He described the experience as "very moving".

Mr Gore, who is in South Africa for three days to expand trade and diplomatic ties, toured the former prison where the apartheid regime imprisoned Mr Mandela and other activists.

The Vice-President and his wife Tipper were shown around the island, including Mr Mandela's cell to visit cell-mate Ahmed Kathrada, who

heads a committee of former prisoners that oversees the island's operations.

Mr Mandela was allotted only small amounts of food and was not allowed by the prison to wear long trousers, while Mr Kathrada, as an Indian, was treated slightly better, the former prisoner told Mr Gore.

"What they lived through is unbelievable. Their inspiration goes beyond the borders of South Africa," Mr Gore said after the visit.

Earlier in the day Mr Gore, donning a head collar, was named an honorary Mayor of Crossroads, the sprawling squatter camp outside Cape Town.

Lesotho's police rebels surrender

BY INIGO GILMORE

TROOPS from Lesotho's national army yesterday defeated a rebel police group behind a nationwide mutiny when they captured the police headquarters in the capital Maseru.

State-run Radio Lesotho said the leader of the mutineers was among 33 who surrendered. The mutiny, which involved two thirds of the 3,000-strong Royal Lesotho Police, began ten days ago when eight accused officers seized the Maseru headquarters and demanded immunity for allegedly murdering three colleagues.

Commonwealth group split on new Nigeria sanctions

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

AN ACTION group seeking to cajole Nigeria into a swifter return to democracy meets in London today for a review of how willing Nigerians are now to make changes demanded by the Commonwealth in 1995, when their membership was suspended.

Human rights advocates fear the eight-man Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group is weakening in its resolve to impose new sanctions if the military Government of General Sani Abacha fails to speed up an election timetable. Activists also point to differences in the group, headed by Stan Mudenge, the

have been arrested. Lloyd Axworthy, Canada's Foreign Minister, believes the group has made no headway; it was not given access to political prisoners during a November visit. He wants the proposed new sanctions, suspended since negotiations began, to be imposed and Nigeria's suspension reaffirmed.

Critics concede General Abacha is in a strong position and widely popular, having won support for a crackdown on crime and customs fraud. More than 2,000 customs officers have been sacked this year, according to the national news agency.

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Row over Jewish settlers mars talks

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER
IN JERUSALEM

A dispute over Israeli plans to boost the number of Jewish settlers living in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip overshadowed the resumption here yesterday of peace talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

Hours before the negotiations got under way at a kibbutz near Jerusalem, David Levy, the Israeli Foreign Minister, warned Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, that peace moves would be set back if his team pressed the issue of settlements.

Speaking to Israel radio, Mr Levy, the head of Israel's large negotiating team, was countering a warning by Mr Arafat that Israel would be gambling with peace if settlement activity was increased on land seized from the Arabs in 1967. "I would propose to Arafat that he does not repeat his declarations of this sort," Mr Levy said. "The matter of settlements ... is not on the agenda."

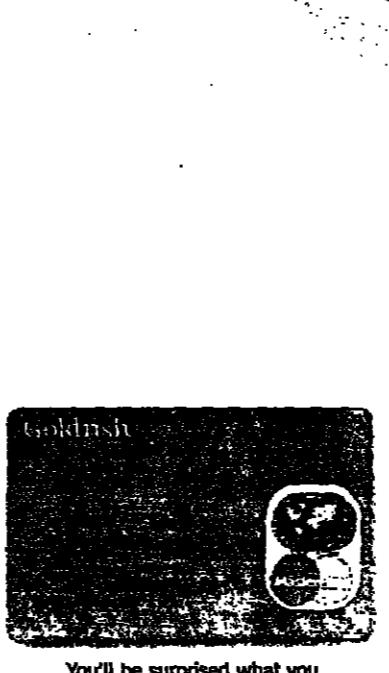
According to guidelines set down last month, the vexed question of settlements, like that of the future of Jerusalem and the fate of millions of Palestinian refugees living abroad — so-called "final status issues" — will be discussed in talks due to open next month and scheduled to finish in 1999.

Palestinians are worried that Israel will accelerate building in the occupied areas in advance of the pullbacks of its troops due to take place in three stages to end in the middle of next year.

The peace talks restarted yesterday in the form of eight separate committees. The main outstanding issues are the procedures for reconciling Israeli demands for security with the opening of a Palestinian airport and seaport in Gaza and the setting up of a safe passage for Palestinians to travel between Gaza and the West Bank.

□ Nablus, West Bank: Palestinian police arrested the head of Palestinian military intelligence in Nablus and two interrogators suspected of torturing a prisoner to death, a police official said. Two officials in the Nablus governor's office were also arrested. (AP)

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But is it art?

Earlier this month an exhibition celebrating three decades of erotic photographs from the Pirelli calendar opened at the Palazzo Grassi in Venice. In a country where images of near-naked women adorn every billboard and game show girls can resemble soft porn stars (indeed many are porn stars), the appropriateness of staging such an exhibition at a venue dedicated to fine and applied arts was not questioned. The main preoccupation of the Italian media was gossiping about who attended the launch party.

But as the *Times* critic John Russell Taylor noted in his review of the opening, the Pirelli pictures raise complex aesthetic questions: what is art? And is value intrinsic to, or conferred on, a work? What activities does the word "culture" actually describe? And is a photograph of a naked supermodel with a sand-dusted bottom to be judged by the same criteria as, say, a Matisse?

At a meeting next week in London, executives from Pirelli, the Italian tyre and cable group, will seek to persuade the Victoria and Albert Museum that its calendar is indeed a work of art and deserves a major exhibition. It is an audacious move: a bit like asking the Uffizi to provide gallery space for a tribute to the art of Hugh Hefner's *Playboy*. Or perhaps Pirelli are simply exploiting the crazy relativism of an age that lauds Damien Hirst's sheep suspended in a tank of formaldehyde, and Gilbert and George's experiments with urine and excreta as high art.

Once viewed as little more than a sleazy promotional gimmick, *The Calendar*, as it is known at Pirelli, now offers a showcase for the world's A-list photographers and models. Richard Avedon, Herb Ritts, Norman Parkinson and Allen Jones have all worked on it. Bruce Weber, whose stylised, overtly images are the engine driving Calvin Klein's global advertising campaign, has been commissioned to produce the 1998 edition – the first to feature men alongside the obligatory semi-naked supermodels. It will cost something like £1.5 million to produce. Small change for a group with a turnover of £5 billion.

But according to its critics the Pirelli photographs have no place at the V&A or any other dignified institution. The calendar is a pretentious load of old

Should the Victoria and Albert Museum stage an exhibition of Pirelli nudes? Jason Cowley reports

rubbish," the photographer Brian Duffy famously said after working on several calendars. "The pomposity of the Pirelli people is amazing." The art critic Philip Hensher agrees. "The Pirelli photographs are not art. They have no place at the V&A or any other serious museum. Institutions such as these should have nothing to do with Pirelli.

I know Pirelli argues that artists have painted nudes all

through history and that there is nothing wrong with photographs of nudes, especially if they are tastefully done by famous photographers. But the Pirelli pictures are terrible, precisely because they are tastefully done. One of the great things about nudes in the history of art is that they have been the most unbelievable filth, not stylised titillation.

There is a place for this kind of exhibition at, say, a museum of popular culture. You can't blame Pirelli for trying; it's their business to promote their image. But their calendar isn't art; it's conventional silliness." Ursula Owen, co-founder of Virago and now chief executive of Index on Censorship, is troubled by the pictures, but for different reasons. She thinks they may be exploitative of women, though she supports Pirelli's right to stage an exhibition.

As with Page Three, the Pirelli pictures are tacky and may cause distress to women, but censorship is not the answer. We do live in a misogynistic society, but opposing the Pirelli photographs being shown at the V&A would solve nothing."

Colin Ford, founding director of the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford, said the Pirelli photographs posed problems for any serious curator. "I can understand why there is resistance to the exhibition. There is a line of argument saying that these photographs are sleazy and exploitative and shouldn't be given exhibition space. Indeed, there is the politically correct line which says that any picture of

a naked woman is bad. "And yet some of the best photographers in the world have worked for Pirelli. Richard Avedon is a brilliant photographer by anyone's standard. If I had to make a decision on whether to give the go-ahead to an exhibition of this kind at the V&A, I would be more supportive of Robert Mapplethorpe's work, which is difficult, unpleasant and exploitative in a way that Pirelli isn't."

"Of course, the photographers are working within a genre but, at the same time, they are subverting that genre by producing work that is subtle, witty and complex. They are great photographers, not porn merchants, and their photographs challenge expectations as all good art should."

When the Pirelli calendar was established in 1964, few grand artistic claims were made for it. As the cult around it grew, so the photographs became more lavish and explicit.

The 1973 edition, a collaboration between Allen Jones and Brian Duffy, flirted with fetishism and sadomasochism. One photograph, which depicts ice-cream melting on to a woman's breasts, was banned by the then Pirelli group chairman Leopoldo Pirelli.

A year later, Pirelli announced that it would commission no more calendars – because, says communications manager Julie Naylor, "we thought we were becoming better known for our calendars than for our tyres".

It was eventually relaunched in 1984, the old vulgarity replaced by a more stylised eroticism. But it struggled to recapture the old lustre until, in 1994, Herb Ritts was hired to photograph Cindy Crawford, Helena Christensen and Kate Moss sprawled on white sand on Honeymoon Island in the Bahamas. The photographs were a sensation: the calendar reasserted itself as the ultimate corporate marketing device, and the trend for using celebrity photographers and models was

established. The calendar was reborn.

Ms Naylor will spearhead discussions with the V&A. Unswayed by criticism, she is confident that the museum will respond to Pirelli's initiative. Pirelli has held parties at the V&A, and sponsored the transformation of the central quadrangle into a model of a 16th century Renaissance garden in 1987.

"The exhibition is going on tour to Milan and New York; we hope to bring it to the Victoria & Albert Museum early next year. If that doesn't work out we shall target the Tate. I was at the opening in Venice and it was exceptionally well received. There was nothing there that was really raunchy, nothing to cause offence. We have close links with the V&A and believe it is the perfect venue for the exhibition."

Ms Naylor dismisses any suggestion that the photographs are vulgar or exploitative. "The photographs have become more and more beautiful over the years and appeal as much to women as men. In fact, of the requests I get for people wanting to buy a calendar, 98 per cent come from women."

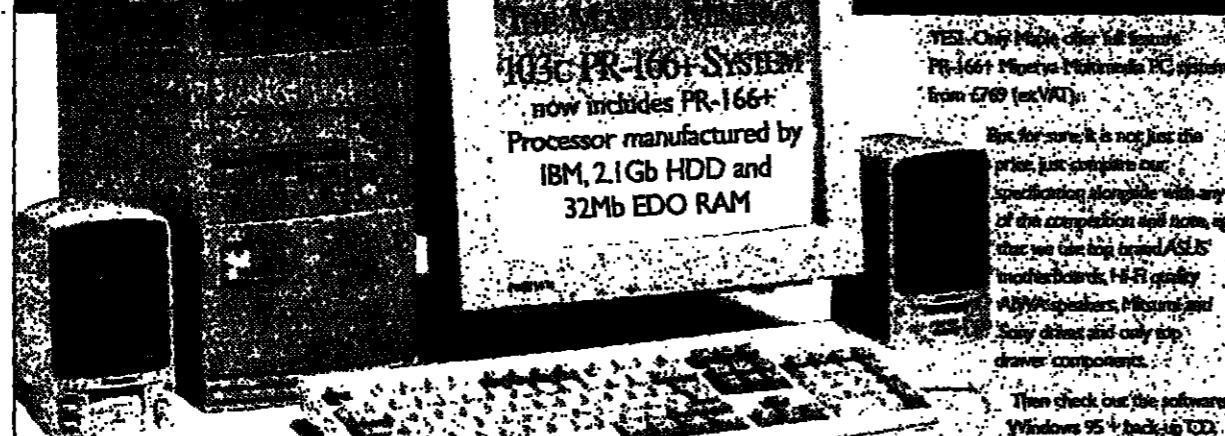
Whether Pirelli will succeed remains a grey area. While reluctant to discuss the forthcoming meeting, the V&A's spokeswoman, Tracey Williamson, says, "It's true that we have close links with Pirelli, but I'm not sure if its exhibition is something that we would give space to." There was a similar message from the Tate Gallery: "The Tate has no plans for such an exhibition because our schedule is full for the next two years."

There was some encouragement, however, from Sir Roy Strong. As a former director of the V&A for 12 years, he worked closely with Pirelli on the Italian garden. "They were very generous sponsors," he recalls. "One ought not to be snooty about them: you should judge photographs on their own merit and Pirelli use some very good photographers. I have no problem with titillation: a lot of pictures in the past have been produced to titillate and they are on the walls of the National Gallery. Anyway, the postcards keep moving as to what is art and what is soft porn and what is decent and what isn't. The museum has to be inclusive."



Naomi Campbell photographed by Richard Avedon for the 1995 Pirelli calendar. Does it compare with a Matisse?

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THE TIMES MONDAY FEBRUARY 17 1997

Simple steps to a healthy life

In part one of our series on natural ways to achieve good health, Shyam Singha explains how to maintain your body's balance without resorting to drugs

Since time immemorial, mankind has searched for an ambrosia, a panacea, a secret formula which would provide relief from illness, and offer longevity, eternal youth, strength, and stamina.

The old approach to medication was to make the body strong by purging it of debris, old blood, and toxins, and feeding it with nutritious food. Modern medicine does not worry about food, but concerns itself mainly with pathogens – bacteria and viruses. But it often happens that when you kill the bacteria or viruses, you also harm the host. Bacteria which are subdued by a drug mutate and change and return to affect us again, in a more virulent manner than before. In the end, chronic disease increases and the resistance of the body is lowered.

Good health involves listening to the body. Once we learn this art, many illnesses can be overcome by allowing the body to heal and rebalance itself without resorting to drugs and chemicals, which could well be the primary cause of the breakdown of our immune systems.

The Western approach to treatment seeks to persuade us that one specific remedy can be applied to a given symptom, regardless of the individual. But specific causes can be different for each person. This approach induces us to be insensitive to our bodies, to ignore the first signs of discomfort and imbalance. And then, when it almost too late, we subject ourselves to a massive over-reaction of Western-style drugs.

It is like ignoring the first signs when your car is not running properly, waiting until it finally breaks down at some inconvenient time, and then involving yourself in paying a huge bill for the eventual repair. A little preventative medicine to rectify the disorder would be far more convenient, and save you from a large subsequent bill.

A more considered approach to health would save us from the damaging side-effects of "modern" medicine, by noticing the mild disorder earlier and practising preventative medicine. A number of commonly available foods or simple remedies can supply this corrective treatment.

When the body tells you, "I am experiencing discomfort", the discomfort will become disease if you fail to listen. The important lesson is to learn to "catch it early".

Our tendency is to suppress what the body is saying, with or without drugs. Although we may take aspirin or paracetamol for a headache, the headache is still there even though we no longer feel it. If the condition is suppressed rather than expressed, it may become inflammation. Thereafter, more drastic measures are called for, such as operations to remove tonsils, appendix or kidney stones. But surgery does not necessarily remove the cause of an illness. There are more gentle ways to help the body. We can treat a disease by increasing the energy of the body, so that it can heal itself. We treat the body from the inside out, instead from the outside in.

Good health also requires regular maintenance of our bodies and monitoring of our lives. It entails listening to our bodies and viewing our discomforts in a whole way, rather than as a specific and particular set of symptoms.

While I am not advocating the non-use of medication, I am strongly against the unnecessary, continuous, and repetitive use of medication without regular evaluation. Many ailments are caused by an inappropriate lifestyle and bad eating habits. It is an old truism that "we are what we eat".

Extracted from *The Secrets of Natural Health*, by Shyam Singha. Element Books, £9.99.



Strong medicine: onions are rich in vitamins, calcium and iron and are one of the most powerful remedies found in the average home

The enemies – and how to defeat them

COLDS

A cold is your friend, rather than your enemy. It is the body's response to foreign invasion. The acute production of fluids is the body's way to expel the invaders. The important point is that your immune system was so debilitated that the invaders saw your body as benign to themselves. Antibiotics will help, but the more sensible, long-term approach is to render your body hostile to invaders.

Tone up your body with a hot bath followed by a cold shower. Eat more anti-carrage foods, such as onions, garlic, chives, ginger – food that is hot, bitter, astringent, rather than sweet, sour and salt. Drink hot lemon and honey. To relieve a rough throat combined with a cold, chew 20 peppercorns and drink a cup of hot water. The relief is usually immediate. Repeat this cure every four hours.

The popular myth that you should starve a fever and feed a cold is incorrect. The opposite is the case. Starve the cold and feed the fever. When you have a fever, the body needs energy to fight it. It should be fed slowly.

CYSTITIS

An attack of cystitis can be caused by inflammation of the urethra. Infection can be communicated to the kidneys. It is important to drink as much liquid as possible. Mix one teaspoon of finely grated lemon rind – not the juice – with one teaspoon ground cinnamon. Boil in 1.5 litres of water and drink while hot. If no lemon or cinnamon is available, drink warm cranberry juice.

HANGOVERS

For a champagne hangover: add one teaspoon of coarse black pepper and ice cubes to orange juice. Wine hangover: add one tablespoon port and one tablespoon brandy to one cup of hot water. General

hangover: add the juice of two lemons and one teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda to a cup of water.

HAY FEVER

Wheat, red meat, sugar and milk products increase susceptibility. Substitute honey, molasses and maple syrup for sugar; soya bean milk or unpasteurised goat's milk products; maize, rice, barley, buckwheat and oats for wheat; fish and poultry for red meat.

For immediate relief: mix one teaspoon of salt in a cup of filtered cold water. Sniff through the nose, until the result emerges via the mouth. It will help to clean the sinuses. Insert a drop of pure sesame oil into each nostril before going to bed.

HEADACHES

A headache is more a symptom than a disease, so do not suppress it. Instead, attempt to identify the cause. The main reason is usually lack of elimination; when the liver is overworked, for instance, and cannot properly detoxify your system. When you have a headache, try to understand the signs, and listen carefully with your mind and your intuition. If you require instant relief, use white willow bark tea instead of a pill.

VERRUCAS

The first way to deal with a verruca is to make the skin acidic by having Epsom salts baths. Then clean the entire area with apple cider vinegar. Once a verruca begins to spread, it is difficult to contain and becomes most painful.

The simplest and most effective remedy is to bake a small onion, remove the centre, and put the onion on the verruca. Leave it in place overnight. Repeat each day.

Warts: put your saliva on the warts as many times as possible during the day. You can also apply crushed garlic.

The cures on the kitchen shelf

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GRAPES

ONIONS

ARTS
THE WEEK
AHEAD

THEATRE

David Hare's adaptation of Chekhov's *Ivanov* opens at the Almeida Theatre
FIRST NIGHT: Wednesday
REVIEW: Friday



BOOKS

Behind the facade: the letters of Edith Sitwell are published
IN THE SHOPS: Now
REVIEW: Thursday



VISUAL ART

The Tate mounts the first major British exhibition of painting by Lovis Corinth
OPENS: Thursday
REVIEW: Tomorrow



MUSIC

The Barbican goes Gallic, as Michael Tilson Thomas opens the LSO's Debussy series
CONCERT: Thursday
REVIEW: Monday

I bought a yoke the other day. It could have been lifted out of one of Thomas Hardy's novels. Beautifully bowed and balanced, it has stayed unchanged since before the writing of *Genesis* and was still commonplace in our rural counties no more than half a dozen generations ago.

This one is leashed about the length which straddles the neck, and a chain is manacled to each end, and so although it could have been for a beast it was most likely made for a human drudge, a hauler of pails of water or buckets of animal feed.

Polished now, and pegged onto the wall of the shop like a painting or a mirror it has become in our century an ornament. The long link with oxen — still yoked together in certain parts of the world — has vanished from this country and the odds are that even on *University Challenge* many young contestants might puzzle over it. It is a magnificently simple piece of work, like so many of the wooden implements used for

farmimg. It is poignant that implements often used for the most arduous and repetitive work should now seem as attractive as, say, a piece of sculpture: more attractive than some modern pieces.

Just as those who built the monumental works of stone in Egypt were doing it not for art but for religion and power and only later was art discovered in them, so, I believe, on a more mundane level, the durnal artefacts of common life, freed by time from their original purpose, float into another sphere and bear comparison with much that can be found in contemporary galleries. In fact, I can see an argument mounted that would have a yoke outlast most of the new sculptures — but that is another discussion.

There is not a single old agricultural implement which I possess

which does not look finely made, whether it is a pig bristle scraper or a scythe or a wooden bowl. Not that I have much of a collection, just a few bits picked up along the way when historical curiosity has been piqued by an unusually pleasing object. They are still remarkably cheap. Even my yoke, which, if given the artistically correct chic contemporary title could fetch a four or a five-figure sum, is comfortably within two digits.

This is not to decry contemporary art. It is, though, to point out that art seems to make up its own mind where it chooses to take up occupation and can as soon appear in a vulgar folk song as in an intricate symphony, in a well-rubbed ballad as in a well-wrought poem, in a traditional dance as in a balletic spectacular, in the plough share as in a torment

MELVYN
BRAGG

of cultivated stone. It is fashionable to blame people for not buying enough contemporary art, and there is nothing to match the particular thrill of feeling at one with your own time by recognis

ing, as you think, something lasting.

But there is also the matter of resonance. This can degenerate into the collecting by numbers which furnishes so many walls — although if this is what you want, who am I to point the finger? The commonplace implements I'm speaking of are outside accepted drawing room art: they were not made for decoration, but for use, and although their decorative value is now extremely high, in my opinion, there are many who cannot throw away their association with soil and do not want to get their hands dirty. I could make the same claims for the great relics of the Industrial Revolution: steam engines, massive machines of all kinds, altars of skill and imagination.

How long will the energy of the metaphors for yoke continue to inform our language in any vital sense? Many of our agricultural

metaphors are like false teeth: in the right place, looking good, but fatally out of contact with the rest of the apparatus.

In our increasingly urban society how much does "ploughing a straight furrow" really mean? There are hundreds of others. Sometimes I think that the huge variety of country imagery will subside in our literature and become rather like dialects are today — regarded as merely quaint and opaque to most readers.

About 10,000 years ago a major revolution took place when we swung from the hunter-scavenger path to that of the agriculturalist. We at this moment may be experiencing just as radical a change as human kind swings yet again, this time from agriculture to the city. Perhaps we're on a different track to a different destination needing different skills and different imagery.

My yoke will be like a relic from a past time, a baton which I can hand on as evidence that this was once the way we lived.

DONALD COOPER

OPERA IN CARDIFF AND BIRMINGHAM

New look at an old friend

February is *Carmen* month: ten days ago a popular version at the Albert Hall, last Saturday a new Welsh National Opera production, while another new staging is playing at the Bastille Opera — report next week. This WNO *Carmen*, given in French with the original spoken dialogue, is strikingly fresh. Every note, every word, has been weighed and considered anew. There is no hint of tradition or routine. You may not agree with everything that happens, but you have to admire the painstaking preparation, the questing intelligence behind it all.

The conductor Robert Spano takes full advantage of the size of a theatre for which the piece was composed to give a sparkling account of the score. Woodwind is always to the fore, textures are ideally crisp, phrases are really phrased (sometimes over-phrased), staccato markings faithfully observed. The colourful detail of Bizet's instrumentation is lovingly realised — the harpist has an especially good evening. The sound is bright, buoyant, invigorating. Some of Spano's tempos are perhaps too deliberate; he has a penchant for gluey ritardandos, and his reading is light on humour, but simply as sound it is irresistible.

It is hard to describe the production by Patrice Caurier and Moshe Leiser without making it sound off-puttingly austere. Christian Renouf's permanent set consists of a brightly coloured Howard Hodgkin-style front cloth, an abstract Turner-ish back wall, the odd chair and table, and that's it. Mood is controlled by

Christophe Forey's sparing use of light. There are no extras, no dancers, and they are missed only at Lillas Pastia's, which is too dull a dive for licentious soliloquy to visit. We, the audience, are the passers-by in the first act and the processions in the last, with the WNO Chorus at their lustiest singing *Les voix* right down at the floo

Carmen
New Theatre, Cardiff

There is little, then, to distract from concentration on the music and the drama. The directors are not afraid of stillness, indeed they insist on it, on people just standing and singing. The chorus groupings are wonderfully eloquent. The children (excellent) don't just do a number, they take part in the show. The drama is played out quite unsparingly: you may think you know *Carmen* but you will still be on the edge of your seat at the raw human tragedy played out before you. The murder is pitilessly gruesome. All of which said, the production, like the conducting, is a little light on humour.

RODNEY MILNES

Doubling gets the cauldron bubbling

PREMIERED exactly 150 years ago, *Macbeth* is an "early" Verdi opera sometimes thought to have a few problematic passages — the witches' and murderers' music, for instance. But it can also be seen as Verdi's first great work. Perhaps these

judgments depend on the quality of the latest production one has seen, for the new City of Birmingham Touring Opera production puts it unmistakably in the "great" category.

The show, which should not be missed as it tours from *Hezlett to Newport* on the Isle of Wight until April 12, does full justice to the work while nevertheless scaling it down. This company is, of course, in a class above most of the country's other travelling operatic outfits and what really distinguished the opening night at the Mayfair Suite in Birmingham's Bullring Centre was the smoothly rehearsed, playing and staging were all channelled into an evening of gripping musical theatre.

Much of the drama is supplied by the orchestra, thanks to Julian Phillips's ingenious one-to-a-part arrangement (the harpist is pressed into second percus

the opera moves with compelling power.

Nine singers cover all the parts, minor characters and chorus included. In the title role Mark Holland presented a big, robust baritone; more varied vocal colour and some softer dynamics might put tormented emotion into his singing to match his vivid physical portrayal of the hammed, deranged ruler.

In its first version, not Verdi's grander reworking for Paris, *Macbeth* was written for the small Florentine Teatro della Pergola, and Matthew Richardson's production shows just what intimate immediate drama it can be. This *Macbeth* is played out in Gideon Davey's camera-lens box set, always sharply focused. Claustrophobic castle walls are evoked in the indoor scenes, and everywhere the box provides a strong visual frame for the few geometric props, lit with striking simplicity by Robert A. Jones. With some neat cuts,

JOHN ALLISON

I HAVE a theory that Lope de Vega took his prejudices very seriously indeed. However subtle his poetry, however novel his structures, Spain's first great playwright was a shrewd populist with crude targets. Any sympathy he evokes in *The Jewess of Toledo*, the victim of a doomed affair with an infatuated Casanova, is spilt by a far more obvious antipathy towards a routinely maligned race.

In Lope's tragedies the Moor is always at the back door and male honour is in constant jeopardy from lowly crossbones. So it is in Strangers' Gallery's production of *The Jewess* (at the Bridewell, EC4). This is a potboiler where pride and power tangle with sexual intrigue and cockeyed machismo. In the first half, Alfonso VIII, the charismatic boy king, is installed on the throne by fervently loyal male courtiers.

In the second, Michelle Gomez's striking Rachel flashes her breasts and a lifetime of Christian observance falls

be lost, with minimal damage: particularly chunks where gossiping noblemen exchange centre chapters before they get to the point.

What Elwood does get right is a balance between Vega's carnivorous passions and McCabe's dry humour. "Why me?" shrieks Rachel's innocent sister as she is put to the sword. "It makes it more dramatic," says David Birrell's nobleman with irreducible logic and despicable pleasure.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

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TT02C

Barbican goes
as Michael
Thomas
the LSO's
easy series
CENT: Thursday
EW: Monday



■ FILM

John Travolta
plays a dishevelled
angel in *Nora*
Ephron's whimsical
movie *Michael*
OPENS: Friday
REVIEW: Thursday



■ POP

A touch of soul,
a pinch of acid
jazz: Jamiroquai
at the Corn
Exchange, Cambridge
GIG: Friday
REVIEW: Monday



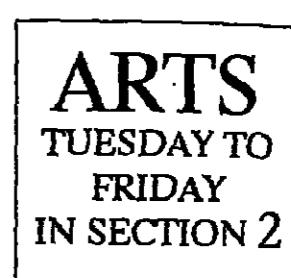
■ OPERA

Giorgio Armani
supplies the
costumes for *Cosi*
fan tutte at
Covent Garden
OPENS: Friday
REVIEW: Monday



■ BLUES

Steve Earle — six
times married, once
imprisoned — pours
out his heart at
the Mean Fiddler
GIG: Saturday
REVIEW: Monday



ARTS
TUESDAY TO
FRIDAY
IN SECTION 2

The nets big thing?

YOU might have thought that this was an unfamiliar name for such a sizeable venue, but the Empire was small fry for Phish. They will follow this sell-out show with an Albert Hall date in June.

Phish are the latest American group to reap the rewards of endless road work, with record success following some years later. Like Hootie and the Blowfish, the Dave Matthews Band and others, their future has the firmest of foundations because their devoted fans helped them to build it.

So for one night only, the Empire assumed the atmo-

■ POP

Phish
Empire, W12

sphere and aroma of a festival venue of the mid-1970s. Phish have been honoured, or perhaps saddled, with the notion of direct descendants from the Grateful Dead and, as lead singer and guitarist Trey Anastasio spunk up another marathon solo to the nimble accompaniment of Page McConnell on piano and organ, you suddenly knew why. Here is a band that plays an 80-minute set, then announces it will be back for the second half shortly.

But this was no exercise in freeform dropout. Phish play with discipline, an ear for melody and, on occasion, endearing waggishness. Squeaking through his Lennon specs, Anastasio looks like a cross between Eric Clapton and Robbie Krieger of the Doors.

Their piece of the rock may seem to belong to a more beatific time, but their progressive tendencies are decorated with jazz and rock, sometimes blaring, sometimes Red Hot Chili Peppers territory.

Live, they are just as likely to mix the robust *Character Zero* with the vulnerable and charming *Waste*, and to veer from *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, faithful to Deodato's jazz-pop version, to a spoof country hootenanny, to bassist Mike Gordon's cheesy rerun of the Elvin chestnut *Love Me*. "Vermont's Phish", proclaimed a T-shirt worn by one of their faithful. Never mind. Deadheads, the Albert Hall had better prepare for the Phishheads.

PAUL SEXTON



A British feast for the eyes: Ralph Fiennes stars as the Sahara explorer Count Almásy in Anthony Minghella's film *The English Patient*, one of the strongest entries in this year's Berlin Film Festival

Exploring the celluloid universe

CINEMA: Geoff Brown surveys the oddballs, and the Oscar hopefuls, at this year's edition of the Berlin Film Festival, which opened on Thursday

So what shall it be today? A Dutch story of youngsters sucked into a maelstrom of sex, techno-parties and drug dependency, or a delicacy from Azerbaijan about a girl's life with her paralysed father? Possibly you could misuse the strength to watch *Sick: The Life and Death of Bob Flanagan, Supermasochist*, or spend four, and a half hours with *Red* (Federico Fellini's *Fox*) following the odyssey of a mother and child through the borders of dream and reality.

Surrounded as so many objects from the far-flung reaches of the celluloid universe, it is tempting at the Berlin Film Festival to plump for the safe bet. Like *Anthony Minghella's* *The English Patient*, newly garnished with 12 Oscar nominations and one of the stonier entries in Berlin's competition section. To be honest, it is pushing things to think that a purely British film is the most venture of the Berkeley-based producer Sam Goldstein, it draws on talent from all over the world. Filming took place in Italy and Tunisia, whose deserts sculpted by light and shade into the shape of a woman's body, form the first startling images. Michael Ondreja's novel of love, betrayal and revenge in and around the Second World War rejoices in metaphors and interlocked plot

lines, and Minghella does a decent job of maintaining the intellectual rigour while pulling you into a love story and supplying a feast for the eyes.

In one way the film is indubitably British, in its focus on repressed emotions. Ralph Fiennes's Sahara explorer Count Almásy may be Hungarian by birth, but he flies the Union Jack with his buttoned-down demeunour, and takes the longest while to respond openly to the glances of the aristocratic Kristin Scott Thomas. The love affair's cool temperature will probably reflect the film's popular appeal; but connoisseurs should be fairly content when the film opens in Britain next month.

Nationality is an issue, too, in *Smilla's Sense of Snow*, which opened the festival on Thursday. "You're of Greenlandic descent," Julie Ormond is told. This is difficult to believe, though Bille August's adaptation of the best-selling novel by Peter Høeg depends on us sensing Smilla's kinship to Inuit culture and the Arctic wastes. The young scientist lives in Copenhagen, a city largely populated by English and Irish actors, until her

obsession with the fatal fall of a six-year-old boy from her apartment block roof sends her back to the glaciers for a confrontation with a meteorite, a prehistoric worm and the demented Richard Harris.

Ormond captures well enough some aspects of Smilla's character: the damaged, outcast afraid to love; the fearless woman in a man's world. But she lacks the weight to carry the film; and August never quite generates sufficient tension to make the film work as a thriller.

Many of the American movies in Berlin are all of a piece in their subject-matter: sex and sexual identity. In the Panorama section, a day does not go by without members of an all-girl band going on the rampage in Seattle (Kristine Peterson's *Slaves to the Underground*) or HIV-positive drag queens accosting politicians with syringes (Stephen Winterton's *Chocolate Babies*). No film, however, tackles sex with such breadth and comic flourish as

Milos Forman's *The People vs. Larry Flynt*. After his third period escapades of the 1980s — *Ragtime*, *Amadeus* and *Valmont* — it is a sweet delight to see the Czech émigré doing what he does best: observing contemporary manners. Forman's subject is the real-life publisher of *Hustler* magazine who took his belief in the freedom of expression to the floor of the Supreme Court. Woody Harrelson does nothing to make the porno businessman especially likeable, but you have to admire the man's persistence and cheek when he survives paralysis and the loony

film industry during his first five years. Imagine Virginia Bottomley chairing a jury at an international film festival. Still, Britain is contributing one jury member, David Hare, and his latest film, *The Designated Mourner*, a barely cinematic transfer of Wallace Shawn's play, is on show as a mark of respect. The film serves a historical function by preserving the National Theatre performances, but the sterility of the images does nothing to improve the chances of the élitist culture that Shawn's talk marathon sees as being under attack.

Britain is also fielding a 100 per cent British film in competition: *Twin Town*, a rough and violent slice of Swanscombe life from the TV actor and documentary-maker Kevin Allen. At first the film marks time with in-your-face comedy about local criminals and drug-happy layabouts. Then a revenge plot kicks in, involving urination, a dismembered dog and a torched caravan. This gives the film some much-needed muscle, though it hardly encourages any more finesse. Boisterously performed, and gratuitously unpleasant at times, *Twin Town* is all set to join *Shallow Grave* and *Train*

spotting as a flag-bearer for the new regional British cinema.

Beyond the English-language fare, not much has been stirring so far in the competition section, though *Port Djema*, a promising first stab at direction by the French producer Eric Heumann, offers much solid atmosphere wrapped around a hesitant story. We are in East Africa, a former French colony torn apart by rival ethnic factions. A Paris doctor, rather somberly played by Jean-Yves Dubois, arrives to pick up the traces of a friend, recently murdered. A French Embassy fellow terms his activities "existential tourism". The phrase also characterises the whole film, but at least the postcards Heumann sends home are nicely photographed.

Another producer turned director, Gerardo Herrero, shows his mettle in *Comanche Territory*, which pitches a Spanish TV anchorwoman into the war in Sarajevo. Sudden gun-fire and the surreal landscape of destruction offset the same old story about the ethics of war reporting. At one point the reporters are compared to a travelling circus, never at home, always at some hotspot or other, filing copy until death from land mines or sniper fire intervenes. This could almost describe film critics on the festival circuit, except that we rarely die, except occasionally of boredom.

PAUL SEXTON

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America finds a new strategist

Bronwen Maddox on Madeleine Albright's European tour

Madeleine Albright, the first American Secretary of State since Henry Kissinger in the mid-1970s to have superstar status, arrives in London tomorrow on her inaugural tour of nine world capitals in 11 days. That flamboyant demonstration of stamina is intended to be the start of a sustained bid to set American foreign policy on a clearer, more successful course than it has followed for years.

The buzz that has accompanied her appointment is such that *Newsweek* magazine pronounced Washington to be "Mad about Madeleine". The recent revelation that her parents, Czech refugees, were Jewish — a fact she says she did not know herself — has added to her mystique. She is not shy of invoking the symbolism of her rise to eminence: "I think I really am the embodiment of the turbulence of the 20th century, as well as of the tolerance and optimism of the United States."

But she has also been criticised for lacking Dr Kissinger's encompassing vision of what foreign policy should be. Beyond her undeniable gift for tough talk and fluent soundbites, the question is whether she can bring coherence to a foreign policy that has for years been notably erratic.

Not since Dr Kissinger's day has America had a Secretary of State who plausibly claimed to have an all-encompassing strategy. According to his doctrine of *Realpolitik*, foreign policy should be dictated by a cool assessment of America's interests, rather than by the pursuit of ideological principles, "special" friendships or an emotional response to foreign tragedies.

Administrations have since then regularly departed from that philosophy. Ronald Reagan gave his foreign policy a strong ideological overlay. Dr Kissinger has since called this a naive and mistaken approach, but concedes that it was successful. The end of the Cold War, which was widely interpreted in the United States as a triumph for American values, has been taken by many in Washington as justification for developing a more explicitly ideological foreign policy.

However, one of the main charges against President Clinton is that his foreign policy in his first term lacked any consistent motivation. On one side, disciples of *Realpolitik* argue that much of his policy has had no obvious connection with American interests; some caustically suggest that the interventions in Haiti, Somalia and Zaire, for instance, were inspired mainly by the images on CNN.

But from the other side, Mr Clinton is criticised by traditional Democratic liberals. They argue that America might do more good than as its firefighter in small, bitter wars, and that Mr Clinton should battle harder with Congress to preserve the foreign aid budget. Mr Clinton has received grudging praise from leading Democrats and Republicans for giving America a central role in some of the

There are excellent reasons to think that she will rise to the challenge

the enlargement is essential and clear. Even more important, the tenor of the talks will define America's relations with Russia and, to a lesser extent, with Europe.

The talks will not be straightforward, however. The meeting in Paris will be dominated by the unresolved question of whether Nato's southern forces will be commanded by an American, or, as France wants, by a European. But already Madeleine Albright is clarifying the Administration's position.

In particular, she has made it clear that she is sceptical about Russian claims that enlargement would fuel dangerous turmoil. In a signed article in this week's *Economist*, she writes: "It is a mistake to think that the fate of Russian democracy is somehow at stake in the enlargement debate. It would not be in our interest to delay or derail enlargement in response to the claims of some Russians that this constitutes an offensive act."

She is also using the trip as a canny sales pitch to the American public, to persuade them of the continued need for a US presence in Europe: "I feel that the United States must affirm its anchoring on the Old Continent."

Foreign policy was always more complicated than Dr Kissinger made it seem; the end of the Cold War has compounded its intricacy for the United States. But there is every reason to hope that even if Madeleine Albright doesn't find a label as durable as *Realpolitik* for her strategy, she will have brought some of the clarity and consistency that have been so lacking.

Baroness Blatch is a Minister of State at the Home Office; she speaks for the Government on Home Office matters in the House of Lords. Last Thursday I went to listen to the debate on the committee stage of the Crime (Sentences) Bill, which imposes mandatory minimum sentences on a variety of crimes, including burglary. The main issue that afternoon was whether judges should have the right to vary these sentences only "in exceptional circumstances", as the Government proposed, or more broadly, if specific circumstances "would make the prescribed custodial sentence unjust in all the circumstances", as the Labour Party's amendment proposed. Lady Blatch was defending the Government's position and opposing the Labour amendment.

In her reply to the debate, Lady Blatch said a number of things which worried me. She was referring to the speech of Lord Carlisle, who had himself at one time been a Home Office minister. She said: "My noble friend referred to the fact that many senior members of the judiciary support his proposals. I speak for the man on top of the bus." I recognise that judges, like ministers, can lose touch with public opinion, and need to be careful about that. Yet the contrast she made between judges who have had to think deeply about the problems of crime and sentencing and bus-riders who have not had to do so should surely be in favour of the judges. She has, I think, no right to claim a superior insight over other people into the attitudes of the man on top of the bus. No doubt plenty of men and women who sit on top of buses share the judges' view that there ought to be sufficient discretion to match sentences, even of persistent offenders, to the circumstances and seriousness of the crime.

What Lady Blatch said seemed to me to be a "know nothing" remark. The tradition of British government is that policies should be adopted only after serious study of their likely consequences. The Treasury does not set the Budget by asking the first passenger to alight from a No 11 bus. Nor should the Home Office decide sentencing policy in so simplistic a manner. The man on top of a bus whom Lady Blatch talks about is assumed to be overwhelmed by judges, and indeed Lady Blatch rather glories in sharing them.

By itself, I would probably have let her comment go, though it shows how far *populism* has replaced serious analysis in the Home Office. I was rather more irritated when she went on to argue that it is snobbish to suggest that burglars who steal valuable objects should receive longer sentences than burglars who steal objects of little value.

"My noble friend appears to suggest — and I find this almost offensive — that stealing valuable items from people who have such items should be taken more seriously than the persistent burglar who daily terrifies people who are much less fortunate by stealing items of lower value such as a bottle of milk, 50p from a purse or small but essential items from people who do not have very much."

Surely this is an absurd argument. Many of us have at one time or another had a bottle of milk stolen. It is an irritation, but there are very few people for whom it is a catastrophe. It has never terrified anyone I have met. One of the peers who voted for the Labour amendment was the Marquis of Bath. He had a Titian valued at £5 million stolen from Longleat.

Even the Home Office ought to see the difference between stealing a Titian and a pint of milk

The Lords aren't soft on crime, just sensible

Baroness Blatch believes that the courts ought to take the theft of a bottle of milk as seriously as the theft of a Titian. She would be hard put to it to find anyone riding on the top of a bus who would share so ridiculous a conclusion. The man on the top of the bus believes that there should be big penalties for big crimes and little penalties for little crimes. He has a sense of proportion.

Lady Blatch went on to make it clear that this disproportionate severity in the minimum sentences for

sent to prison for three years, one year for each pint of milk. They would not give the trial judge, whom they probably regard as soft on crime, the discretion of mercy. "Exceptional circumstances" do not constitute a judicial discretion.

I will not go on with Baroness Blatch's speech except to observe the extreme implausibility of her unqualified assertion that "mandatory penalties will not lead to injustices", of course in some cases they are bound to. The difficulty arises because Michael Howard confuses the need for severe punishment of serious crime with the social problem of the misfits and petty thieves who cause trouble to the police and society by their relatively trivial crimes. If one argues that when there have been no threats or violence, even the third theft of a bottle of milk or its equivalent should never be visited with three years in prison, what sort of reply does one get? One is accused, with wild irrelevance, of being soft on rape, murder, terrorism and Category A drugs.

The Government's critics take the view that this rigour towards crime should be accompanied by an equal concern for liberty and justice. We think it is right for the police to bug or burgle the most dangerous and powerful criminals, but we believe that such exceptional police powers need special supervision and prior approval. We think that persistent offenders who commit a serious offence should indeed be given long sentences. But we do not want the petty thief, the inadequate, the mentally ill, the homeless poor, or silly girls and young men to be exposed automatically to inappropriate and unjust sentences for repeated minor offences. We trust the judges, dealing with actual cases, to see that does not happen. We regard an automatic three years in prison for the third petty theft as a grotesque injustice, which will bring British justice itself into disrepute. We are offended by the assertion that ordinary British people are so blind with bloodlust against even petty criminals that every bus has its top seats filled with many Judge Jeffreys. We want the British virtues of rationality and fairness restored to Home Office policy. That is not weakness; it is common sense.

William Rees-Mogg

repeated minor burglaries was the true intention of the Bill. She left that in no doubt. "I am simply saying that I support the proposals set out in the Bill. If someone burgles persistently, whether he steals a loaf of bread, a pint of milk, or 50p from a purse, he should receive a sentence of at least three years." A young woman, perhaps a single mother, steals three pints of milk, perhaps from neighbouring flats, and gets caught each time. The Government, not just Lady Blatch on the top of her bus, but Michael Howard in the Home Office, in the Cabinet, the Prime Minister in Downing Street, all think she should be taken away from her child and

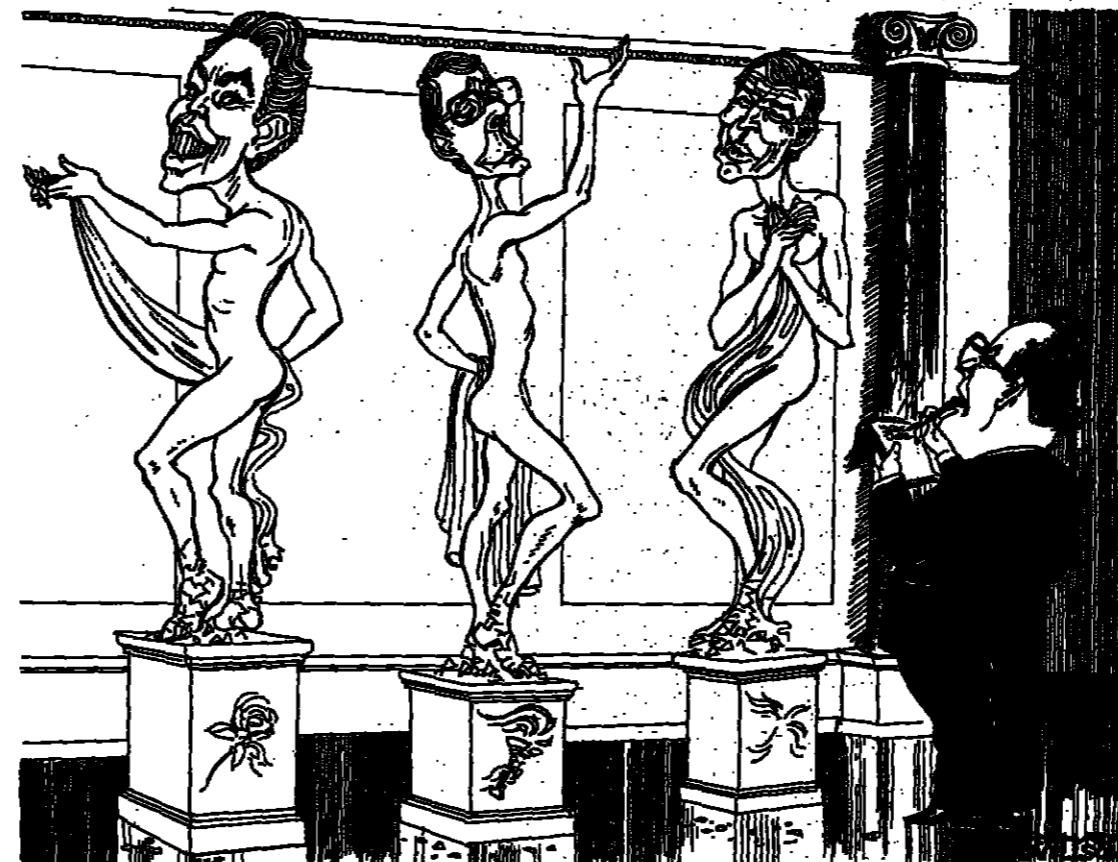
The Three Ingratiators

Peter Riddell
reads short
manifestos for
and sees the
naked truth

The battle of ideas is as important as the battle of soundbites. A party may win office by its campaigning, but it will succeed as a government only if it has won the intellectual debate. This was true of the Liberals after 1906, Labour after 1945 and, more ambiguously, after 1964, and the Tories after 1951 and 1979. Now, the direction is less clear, since Tony Blair has accepted most of the free market and public service reforms introduced since 1979.

The other day I was talking to one of John Major's closest advisers, who expressed, with uncharacteristic passion, the frustration felt in Downing Street that the media did not recognise that the Government had won the key policy arguments. He has a point. Labour is not really challenging the Tories' approach to monetary policy, taxes, public spending, competitiveness, the NHS, education and so forth. Of course Mr Blair is proposing changes of emphasis, many quite important, to improve the current system and make it fairer. But with the big exception of constitutional reform, the "new" Labour programme is largely within the framework established over the past 18 years. That is precisely the complaint of many Labour intellectuals treating at what they see as Blairite caution.

Labour's repositioning has made life harder for the Tories. This is brought out in three short new books by politician-academics which present the case for the main parties (published today by Penguin at £3.99 each). *Why Vote Conservative?* is by David Willetts, now chairman of the Conservative Research Department; *Why Vote Labour?* is by Tony Wright, a political scientist before his



election as an MP in 1992; and *Why Vote Liberal Democrat?* is by William Wallace, now a life peer and an international relations specialist.

There is a substantial overlap between the Wright and Wallace books, despite the local and personal tensions between Labour and the Liberal Democrats. Their cases turn on the balance between economic efficiency and social cohesion. The strength of the Willetts book is its defence of the free market approach implemented by the Government. Without the measures taken since 1979 — and despite some horrendous errors, largely ignored by Willetts — public spending and taxes would have been much higher and Britain would have been much less competitive. Similarly, far-reaching reforms of the public sector were overdue and necessary. Only a re-elected Tory

government can, he argues, prevent these gains from being eroded.

The weakness in Willetts's case is that he underestimates the social dislocation and divisions that have occurred, and brushes aside the challenge to Britain's political and constitutional conventions from such a long period of one-party rule. His picture of the Blairites as "constitutional militants" who want to abandon self-government to Brussels and transform Britain on the model of continental European social democracy circa 1980 is a grotesque caricature, not least because he accepts that the rest of Europe is abandoning that approach.

The Labour case presented by Tony Wright is a mirror image. He offers an impassioned plea against the social divisions and dislocations of recent years, the shortcomings of the reformed health service, the increase in child poverty, and the despair of the unemployed. His alternative is based on shared community values and collective action. Social cohesion is for Wright a precondition of economic efficiency. Both Wright and Wallace highlight the shortcomings in our democracy. Wallace's book, the patchiest of the three, also makes a strong case for green initiatives.

But Wright's wholesale condemnation of the Tory approach is not consistent with the fiscal caution of "new" Labour. How can Labour values, and a belief in activist government, be reconciled with inherited Tory financial goals? Despite all of Gordon Brown's efforts, a credibility gap still exists. Labour

remains unconvincing on public services in view of its past opposition not just to privatisation but to health and social security changes.

Wright's book should be read alongside the detailed proposals on education, unemployment and business strategy from Richard Layard of the London School of Economics in his new book *What Labour Can Do*. Layard admits the problem of containing public spending. He argues that there is no case for bringing spending below 40 per cent of national income, the Tory target, and that "a slightly higher figure may be necessary to achieve Labour's social objectives". He accepts that this, and tax cuts for low earners, may require above-inflation tax increases on pollution, smoking and alcohol.

If the election were to be decided purely on which party could most convincingly run the government, hold down spending and taxes and operate a free market policy, then the Tories would have a powerful case. But John Major cannot just sell himself and his policies. He is also leader of the Tory party. And the Tories do not look like a party of government. They are fractious and deeply divided.

Nowhere, of course, is this clearer than over Europe. The best chapter in Wallace's book concerns the muddle of British foreign policy produced by the need to appease Tory Eurosceptics. Revealingly, David Willetts has just two evasive paragraphs on single currency. It is hard to see how a re-elected Major Government could pursue a coherent policy that would keep Britain "at the heart of Europe" without splitting the party.

The Tories have run out of time, and the voters' patience. It is no longer enough for the intellectual tide still to be running in the direction of free markets and fiscal and monetary restraint. That would impose serious strains on an incoming Labour government, as it has on the Clinton Administration, but at present what matters is that enough voters believe it is time for a change. As one minister was told by a former supporter: "I don't really disagree with your policies. It's just that I'm fed up with you lot."

Sisterly feelings

THE DUCHESS of Devonshire decided unexpectedly not to attend the memorial service for her sister Jessica Mitford at the Lyric Theatre in London's Shaftesbury Avenue yesterday evening.

No reason was given for her absence, even though the Duchess was listed as a speaker on the programme along with members of Jessica's family as well as newscaster Jon Snow, John Mortimer and Polly Toynbee. A friend of the Duchess said that the Duchess

had been upset by plans for the service.

The memorial for the lady famous for her attack on the funeral industry in her bestseller *The American Way of Death* was to have been idiosyncratic, according to Jon Snow, the master of ceremonies. "The service will particularly concentrate on the debunking of the death industry," he said last week. "We've four undertakers on show, a Cadillac coffin, a DIY disposal coffin, one of which is a



THE duchess (left) and Jessica Mitford

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dress the bald question. At a Washington D.C. press conference the other day, Gore — who likes to convey a youthful zest — ill-advisedly bowed his head in front of the television lights.

Inevitably, the CNN footage clearly captured a Bryan Gouldish bald patch, which the Vice-President tries to conceal by scraping what little hair he has across the bald waste. It is about as successful as certain other Democrat cover-ups.

The Duchess is said to have found the idea distasteful. Although the service was toned down, with only a couple of undertakers displaying their wares, she still chose not to attend. Last week Jessica's other living sister Diana, Lady Moseley, 86, decided not to go either. "Jessica means nothing to me at all," she said of the left-wing sister who once denounced her as a dangerous fascist.

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A HIGHER PRIORITY

Early enlargement of Nato spells danger for Europe

Madeleine Albright, who makes her European debut as American Secretary of State this week, is an energetic politician of passionate convictions, who expresses herself with singular bluntness. Among the strongest of these convictions is that America must throw its full weight into the historic task of building a peaceful and undivided Europe working in partnership with the United States. Part of her task this week will be to prise the governments of the European Union out of their introspective shell. The most urgent reason for Europeans to rise to the Albright challenge is that the centrepiece of her European strategy, the enlargement of Nato by 1999, is dangerously misjudged.

Far from enhancing the security of the European continent, this imminent decision risks creating fresh sources of insecurity, inviting confrontation with Russia and, by weakening Nato's military credibility, impairing the Alliance's capacity to respond to new dangers that wiser policies might avert.

Ms Albright, who insists that she and President Clinton have "no higher priority" than Nato enlargement, prefaced her arrival in Europe with an article in *The Economist* dismissing all criticism as an argument for "fossilised immobility". Nato must enlarge, she said, or be "stuck in the past, risking irrelevance and even dissolution". If this was an implicit threat, critics should not be cowed. Nato's new military doctrines and its successful Partnerships for Peace, currently yielding operational dividends in Bosnia, prove how simplistic it is to make enlargement the acid test of its capacity to adapt.

Ms Albright claims that enlargement would promote the "integration" of Europe — an overtly political task that stretches the remit of a defensive military alliance. But Ms Albright also describes the frontiers of Nato as "freedom's boundaries". Enlargement, then, will create a new dividing line, one likely to be drawn in the first instance along eastern borders of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic where she was born.

Ms Albright may expect these countries "to export stability eastward" rather than see

themselves as having escaped westward; but that will be scant comfort for the countries outside "freedom's boundaries". She cites President Clinton's assertion that eligibility for Nato membership must be determined by "new behaviour, not old history"; but since the US has no plans to bring the Baltic states, let alone "robustly democratic" Ukraine into Nato, this is casuistry.

Europe will not be durably secure unless Russia becomes, as did postwar Germany, a stable democracy. Russians of all political persuasions see enlargement as a betrayal of Washington's promise to include it in "a security circle for all of Europe". To avoid feeding Russian phobias about encirclement is wisdom, not appeasement. Ms Albright describes "a close and constructive relationship" with Moscow as one of Nato's vital tasks. This should be Washington's "higher priority"; and the process cannot be rushed. It will require years, not the few months between now and the Nato summit in July. Given time to build habits of military cooperation with Nato, Moscow might conceivably be persuaded that its standing as a great power is fully recognised in the Nato-Russia charter and joint council that America offers. Nato enlargement can wait.

The Clinton Administration claims that Russia is resigned to the inevitable. In private it argues that antagonising Russia by sticking to the timetable is less risky than applying the brakes because this would send "the wrong message" to hard-liners in Moscow. But it is pro-Western Russian modernisers who fear early Nato enlargement most. Has the Clinton Administration no memory of German railway timetables in 1945? Neither in Europe nor in America has the public been alerted to the momentous security implications of Nato enlargement, which each Nato parliament will be called upon to ratify. Let the US by all means press the EU to hasten its own enlargement, a step which would have nothing but benign consequences for European peace. But if it is serious about a safer Europe, it should put Nato enlargement on hold. It is still not too late.

ULSTER ARITHMETIC

Unionists have little to gain from the fall of the Government

David Trimble makes an unlikely coquette. But no parliamentarian has been so assiduously courted this Valentine weekend, and none so blushingly reticent about their intentions. Since Labour decided last week to move a vote of censure on Douglas Hogg's handling of BSE, both Opposition and Government have been sending billets-doux to Belfast. Labour whips have altered the composition of backbench committees to allay Unionist concerns. The Conservatives have signalled that their "certified herd" scheme will see Ulster farmers benefit. Given the Tory failure so far to make real progress in lifting the beef ban despite all manner of initiatives, Mr Trimble may be tempted to throw in his lot with Labour and maximise credit with the most likely incoming administration. That would, however, be a grave tactical and strategic error.

In the interests of his party and province, Mr Trimble should stay his hand tonight. Mr Hogg may be a serial bungler, Ulster's farmers a conspicuous casualty of the Government's failure, but the emotional pleasure in delivering a bloody nose would be paid for by influence forfeited. As long as Mr Major's administration survives, Unionists have a receptive ear in Downing Street. The Prime Minister's commitment to the peace process, which Dublin does not doubt, means that Mr Major will not act to inflame moderate nationalist sentiment. But he can go some way to meeting the legitimate Unionist concerns in the weeks he has left.

Whatever he achieves in Brussels for Ulster's cattle, the Prime Minister has it in his power to advance accountability in Northern Ireland. A Grand Committee for Ulster which matched those for Scotland

and Wales would give Northern Ireland's elected representatives a welcome opportunity to flex democratic muscle, and prove that the parliamentary path can secure results. A Unionist Party that had declined to vote against the Government tonight would be better placed to secure that gain and win other improvements at the margins.

Mr Trimble may fear that support, however grudging, for Mr Major will see Tony Blair alienated and Ian Paisley exulted. He should not worry. If Mr Blair is serious about the peace process he cannot afford any vindictiveness towards the leader of Ulster's biggest party. Moreover, the later the election and the smaller any Labour majority, the better for Mr Trimble. In Ulster itself, wise electors are more likely to appreciate a leader who has used Parliament to secure advantages for the province rather than as an echo chamber for indignation.

Mr Trimble's calculations may be base, but that does not mean his motives are. He has a duty to use the mechanisms of democracy to safeguard the greater number in Northern Ireland who wish to keep the Union secure. Those who urge Mr Trimble most volubly to abandon the Tories have not been in the vanguard of those defending Ulster's democratic majority. Whatever the result tonight, the Tory Party is more likely than its rivals to prove a friend of the Union in the future. Tory inconstancy in the past may incline Mr Trimble to abstention, but any action that would make a Labour victory more likely would only delight Sinn Fein the more. Republicans hope for an early election and a Labour landslide. The Unionists have, potentially, little to gain and much to lose by precipitating the fall of this Government.

SUGAR AND SPICE

The British music industry makes billions as well as bad girls

The Spice Girls do not present the usual image of entrepreneurs. But they are merchant venturers of the age. Like Francis Drake and Walter Raleigh, in behaviour as well as appearance they are unconventional and a bit piratical. Their politics may surprise. Their claim that Baroness Thatcher was the original Spice Girl is cheeky. But this group of five young women, including one who first made her mark by taking her clothes off for page three, front one of the world's most successful marketing operations. This weekend they climbed the Everest to No 1 in the US league table called Hot 100.

And they represent an economic phenomenon as well as a cultural one. Next week the Brit Awards, Britain's self-congratulatory prize-giving of the music industry, will no doubt make headlines for bad behaviour, arrogance and childlessness. But behind the hype and the hysteria, the numbers are deadly earnest. Spotty-faced youths strumming guitars may deafen and disgruntle fogeys. But they are the future of Britain's fastest growing industry. Music is now worth £5 billion a year. The value of UK record sales rose last year by 6.1 per cent. Compact discs, until recently mocked as unnecessary replacements for vinyl, now shift 160 million units a year. They are the most popular sound-carrier in the history of the industry.

A generation ago the Beatles invented a

British sound. For the first time this century British popular music led the way, instead of being a pale reflection of what was happening in the USA. The Beatles were awarded MBEs for services to exports. Since the Beatles the domestic market for music sales has multiplied more than sixfold. When asked how they spend their leisure, 81 per cent of Britons aged between 16 and 24 reply that they listen to CDs, tapes or records at least once a week. Such canned music comes second only to television as a leisure pursuit. The British music industry has now grown bigger than shipbuilding, electronic components and water supply, with little help from governments that pour money into more conventional enterprises.

Pop may attract a generally frivolous or esoteric press. But it does not need official encouragement or subsidy. The President of the Board of Trade does not include many record producers on his world cavalcade to drum up exports for Britain. But the Spice Girls and their promoters are examples of the buccaneering spirit that has always made British industry. Purists may scoff at their success. But hundreds of bands, record promoters and song-writers are noisily earning a fortune for themselves — and Britain. The Spice Girls, with their brash, enterprising culture are, as they claim, heiresses to the spirit of Lady Thatcher.

Both Mrs Lawrence deserve justice to have been done, but we can truly say that that has been the case?

Yours etc,
SANDRA SANGLIN,
83 Roxeth Hill, Harrow, Middlesex.
February 14.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Trial by media' in Lawrence case

From Mr Ronald Thwaites, QC

Sir, As one of the defence counsel in the trial of those charged with the murder of Stephen Lawrence at the Old Bailey in April 1996 may I attempt to shed light on some important facts which seem to have been forgotten in the excitement surrounding the inquest this week into his death, reports, article and leading article, February 15.

At trial, the issue was one of identification; no one disputed that Stephen Lawrence had been the victim of an unprovoked racist attack or that he had been murdered. The sole witness as to identification, had a fleeting glimpse of one of the attackers, at night, in difficult and shocking circumstances. He had given several different contradictory accounts and changed his evidence again in front of the trial judge, Mr Justice Curtis.

In the course of his reasoned judgment, Mr Justice Curtis said of the witness: "I am entirely satisfied that where recognition or identification is concerned he simply does not know ... whether he is on his head or his heels ... Nearly three years further on in effect he has identified three, if not four [different] people as the stabbing

Thus the judge excluded the evidence of identification on the grounds that there was no true recognition and further that the evidence was "tainted": no judge, conscientiously applying the law to the facts, could have come to a different decision. He concluded: "Adding one injustice to another does not cure the first injustice done to the Lawrence family."

The prosecution decided themselves to offer no further evidence against the three accused, who were then automatically acquitted. The reason why the case was abandoned did not involve any fault or failure of the criminal legal system or those who participated in it: there was insufficient evidence to continue with it.

There is now (reported) talk of a civil action. But in order to prove a serious crime in the civil courts, it is necessary for the plaintiff to produce sufficient evidence to prove the case to a standard equivalent to the criminal standard of proof.

The notion that it will somehow be easier to succeed against acquitted defendants in the civil court is likely to mislead and ultimately disappoint all those who sympathise with the Lawrence family's desperate and understandable quest for justice. Whether sitting alone, or with a jury, a judge must filter evidence to ensure that it is fit for forensic consumption.

The parts of the media that have challenged the acquitted defendants to "see us if you dare" will have won few admirers. It is well known that the acquitted defendants are unemployed, without resources and therefore cannot take proceedings for defamation, regardless of the provocation offered.

To bait them with headline taunts therefore involves newspapers in little risk, requires no courage and will be seen by informed observers as a cynical exploitation of a truly tragic event.

Yours faithfully,
RONALD THWAITES,
10 King's Bench Walk, Temple, EC4.
February 15.

From Mr Jonathan Caplan, QC

Sir, Finality of verdicts can never be the dominant principle in our society. If it was, the media could never have utilised their considerable resources — as they have so valuable in the past — to press for alleged miscarriages of justice to be set right. What in principle is the difference when the media comment, however forcefully, on an acquittal? Are only parts of the judicial process to be open to public scrutiny?

Of course, reputations can and will be affected but that is a matter for the law of libel. Whether this area of the law is beyond the pocket of most, and whether legal aid should be extended to defamation, is a quite separate issue.

The reaction of the Home Secretary that the *Daily Mail* "haven't done anything against the law unless of course these men claim that the piece has been defamatory" was surely, therefore, correct and that of the Bar Council, which condemned the newspaper's action, was wrong.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN CAPLAN,
Five Paper Buildings, Temple, EC4.
February 15.

From Ms Sandra Sanglin

Sir, I am struck by the qualitative differences between the cases of the two Mrs Lawrence, one white, one black. The wife of the headmaster, Philip Lawrence, has received national support, with large numbers of high-profile personalities wanting to join her cause, and no stone left unturned in bringing the killer of her husband to justice.

The mother of Stephen Lawrence, on the other hand, is still fighting to find justice for her son. I am left feeling very uneasy about a system that appears to accord different treatment to different individuals depending on their colour and standing in the community.

Both Mrs Lawrence deserve justice to have been done, but we can truly say that that has been the case?

Yours etc,
ALLAN MALLINSON,
The Cavalry and Guards Club,
127 Piccadilly, WI.
February 12.

Dangers of current moves towards Nato enlargement

From Sir Rodric Braithwaite, GCMG

Sir, The debate on Nato enlargement has still not got down to brass tacks. You report (February 10; see also letters, February 12) that Nato officials know that they must make a real effort to convince not only the Russians but — more damningly — the US Congress, that enlargement is in everyone's interest. That is a sad comment on a policy which is now nearly five years old.

There is a real dilemma here. The countries of Eastern Europe want the West to assure their security, and fear a "new Yalta" in which their interests could once again be carved up between Russia and the rest of us. The Russians believe that they should have a genuine say in managing the security of a continent to which they belong and from which they have so often faced invasion. Both sets of aspirations are entirely understandable. The West has found no convincing way of reconciling them.

Enlargement can no doubt be negotiated successfully with a small group of Central European countries. But it is not a foregone conclusion that even a limited enlargement will get through the parliaments of Nato's existing members, or that it will then be carried forward to cover the countries of Eastern Europe who believe they have no convincing way of reconciling them.

Decisions in the North Atlantic Council are traditionally reached by consensus. There is no provision in the Treaty for a majority vote. Nor, in my experience, was such a procedure ever resorted to. Of course the requirement for consensus does in practice give each member, whether it be the United States or Luxembourg, the opportunity to delay a decision, or in the last resort, to impose a veto. But throughout its history Nato has shown itself adept at avoiding "last resorts". This may sometimes have involved arm twisting, but in the end consensus has been reached. It is essential, when decisions go to the heart of the vital security concerns of all members, that nothing should be done to dilute this process.

There are only two ways in which

given equal membership in a European security body capable of taking serious decisions. This could be a beefed-up Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to which the West's objections are largely spurious; or a transformed Nato, which could be tantamount to a veto. The first would hardly be likely to appeal to the Russians: moreover, by undermining the basis of the Nato mutual security guarantee it could lead to the disintegration of the alliance. The alternative of a Russian veto is patently unacceptable.

So we are left with consultation, which should be as frank and close as possible, with the aim of reaching "consensus" between Nato and Russia. In the last resort however the integrity of the alliance's right to make its own decisions must be maintained. The security of all its members depends on it.

Yours faithfully,
RODRIC BRAITHWAITE
(Ambassador in Moscow, 1989-92,
79 Hampstead Way, NW1).
February 12.

From Sir Clive Rose, GCMG

Sir, The proposal for a Nato-Russia Council (report, February 10) raises many questions. Sir Patrick Duffy and Alan Lee Williams (letter, February 12) have rightly identified the crucial one: what voting rights would Russia have?

Decisions in the North Atlantic Council are traditionally reached by consensus. There is no provision in the Treaty for a majority vote. Nor, in my experience, was such a procedure ever resorted to. Of course the requirement for consensus does in practice give each member, whether it be the United States or Luxembourg, the opportunity to delay a decision, or in the last resort, to impose a veto. But throughout its history Nato has shown itself adept at avoiding "last resorts". This may sometimes have involved arm twisting, but in the end consensus has been reached. It is essential, when decisions go to the heart of the vital security concerns of all members, that nothing should be done to dilute this process.

There are only two ways in which

who favour the more modern services. The economics are actually very simple.

Yours sincerely,
NICK RALPH,
27 Seaview Road,
Hayling Island, Hampshire.
February 13.

From Mr Jock Knight

Sir, The bishops who were so loud in their condemnation of the recent remarks of Lord Runcie (report, February 10) might benefit from looking at the Muslim church. There are no raves or trendy services in the mosques. Not a word of the Koran has been altered, while Anglicans have several versions of the Bible, have introduced the Alternative Service Book in preference to the Book of Common Prayer and have messed about with the words of much-loved traditional hymns.

Anglican congregations are dwindling. The followers of Islam appear to increase.

Yours faithfully,
JOCK KNIGHT,
Broomlands,
Hatheron, Nantwich, Cheshire.
February 12.

From Mr Michael Ivens

Sir,

The advice of Mr Michael Ivens, QC, on Labour's windfall tax (report, February 13) is at variance with Aims of Industry's view that Labour's plans are likely to come unstuck by a challenge based on European law, as well as a challenge in the British courts and long drawn out complaints from private objectors. Mr Ivens' opinion is, however, naturally welcomed by the Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer.

We believe Mr Brown's optimism is misplaced and is unlikely to provide him with a quick financial raid that will save his economic plans. He does not face the dire problem of how to choose which firms to tax and which to turn a blind eye to without causing his proposed Bill to be hybrid (affecting private as well as public interests).

It may be electorally damaging for Mr Brown to state which companies and which shareholders and pensioners will be affected, but that is surely his duty.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL IVENS,
(Consultant),
Aims of Industry,
2 Mulgrave Road, NW10.
February 13.

From Mr J. B. Booth

Sir, Is not the phrase, "smoke-filled rooms" — identified by "a senior Whitehall source" as the natural habitat for civil servants such as Sir John Kerr (report, February 8) — now long overdue for removal from the choice of expressions available to journalists?

I retired from public service over five years ago and by then most of the meetings I attended in Whitehall took place in rooms where smoking was banned or actively discouraged.

Fortunately, I was not required to venture into the "darker recesses of government" — but perhaps even there smoke-reduction measures are allowing more light to penetrate. Or is that wishful thinking?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN BOOTH,
10 Wynford Green,
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.
February 10.

From Mr Philip Davy

Sir, The television weather presenters were first to fall foul of it, and now you are doing it too. They started with "thick" frost, and now you've followed their "heavy" fog (News in Brief, February 11).

Could anybody explain the thinking behind "thick" frost and "heavy" fog please?

OBITUARIES

DOROTHY FOSDICK

Dorothy Fosdick, American foreign policy expert, died on February 5 aged 83. She was born on April 17, 1913.

ALTHOUGH Dorothy Fosdick's name might not be well known except by the biographers of Adlai Stevenson, who had been her lover in the early 1950s, her behind-the-scenes influence on American foreign policy was immense. For thirty years she acted as chief foreign policy adviser to Senator Henry 'Scoop' Jackson, a power in the Democratic party and a sometime Presidential contender, whose views on international policies were sought by presidents of both parties and all ideologies. The easing of emigration restrictions from countries such as the Soviet Union into the United States was very much Fosdick's work.

A tiny woman, standing only 5ft 5in, Fosdick was feared by many bulky senators in Washington. Though she shrank from the lime-light, she was not frightened of debate, and would jab her opponents in the chest with her finger to make a point. 'She had no personal ambition,' said her sister. 'She only wanted to save the world.'

Her father was the Rev Harry

Emerson Fosdick, a celebrated liberal theologian, who brought his two daughters up in a faculty apartment at the Union Theological Seminary in New York. While her older sister Elinor trained to be a doctor, Dorothy gravitated towards the theoretical. She took classes in government and philosophy at Smith College from which she graduated *summa cum laude*, and taught while she was taking a doctorate in public law from Columbia University.

She had no idea where her career would take her, but was interested in world events. In particular, she had been much distressed by the Senate's failure to ratify the founding treaty of the League of Nations (her uncle Raymond Fosdick had been appointed Under Secretary of the League).

During the war, like many bright young women in American cities, she was recruited to Washington, and put to work for the ambiguously-titled Division of Special Research. Serving on the delegations to the Dumbarton Oaks and San Francisco conferences, she also attended early sessions of the United Nations. In 1948 she was promoted to the newly-formed Policy Planning Staff, a small think tank which helped to shape the Marshall Plan and Nato.



Adlai Stevenson she had known professionally since the war, and as his political ambitions fermented into a presidential campaign in 1952, Fosdick became his lover and campaign adviser. He, however, was already married, and having a long-term liaison with another mistress, the journalist Alicia Patterson. Divorce and remarriage would have damaged him politically, so the complicated arrangement lasted un-

til his election defeat, when Stevenson traded in both old girlfriends for new romantic interests. Fosdick never married, nor ever seemed to regret the fact. Privately, she was doubtful that Stevenson would have made a good president.

In 1954 she began a platonic and more successful professional partnership with the new Senator, Henry Jackson, on whose staff she remained until his death in 1983. Jackson shared her passion for liberal social causes, but was more interested in domestic policy than Fosdick first met him. She persuaded him to pursue her foreign policy ideas. In the 'bunker' of Jackson's loyal staff, so-called because of the cramped office space they shared, she was known as the 'bunker's bubble' — the Yiddish term for grandmother.

Her proudest achievement was her work on the Jackson-Vanick Amendment of 1974, which limited countries that would enjoy the status of 'most favoured nation' with the United States to those who lived up to their commitment on human rights, and who allowed emigration. More than a quarter of a million Jews emigrated from the Soviet Union to the United States because of the new legislation. Alexander Solzhenitsyn called the

amendment 'a profound message that mankind's sole salvation lies in everyone making everything his business.'

She also made several trips to China with Jackson, in pre-Nixon days, and was pleased with their success in opening up communications with that nation. Another of her achievements came during the Yom Kippur War, when she persuaded Jackson to use his contacts to supply arms to the Israelis, a move which had initially been blocked by the Administration.

Jackson never achieved his dearest ambition to become president, a post for which he ran twice in 1972 and 1976. But he remained a valued adviser to Democratic and Republican Presidents up to his death in 1983, just after he and Fosdick had returned from their fourth trip to China.

Fosdick stayed on long enough to hand over the reins to her successor and then retired to edit a book of Jackson's speeches. She also wrote *What is Liberty? and Common Sense and World Affairs*. Though she had no direct survivors, she remained close to her sister, her nephews and nieces, and their five children, all of whom survive her.

THOMAS SNOW

Thomas Snow, CMG, retired diplomat, died on January 20, aged 106. He was born on May 21, 1890.

TOM SNOW's hopes of crowning his diplomatic career with a front-rank ambassadorial posting were dashed in the late 1930s when he crossed swords with Whitehall over Government policy.

As head of the British mission in Helsinki, he foresaw Soviet aggression against Finland and urged his masters in London to act accordingly. He sent his own family home and insisted that other dependents should also leave.

Snow had read all the signs correctly and when the Soviet Union declared war on Finland, bombing Helsinki in late 1939, he had to act on his own advice and evacuate the mission — resettling it in a safe place in the countryside.

But he was telling Whitehall what it did not want to hear. With Britain already confronting Germany, Chamberlain's Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, was anxious to maintain a working relationship with Moscow. The availability of raw materials like timber was a powerful factor.

Snow's problem, it has been said, was that he could not help telling people when he was right. But for that fatal flaw — if it was — he might well have climbed to the top of the diplomatic service.

As it was, instead of moving up a rung, as he might have expected on leaving Helsinki after three years in early 1940, he was transferred sideways to a similar post in Bogotá. It was there in Colombia that he spent most of the Second World War, eventually changing his title from minister to ambassador — a job description used more sparingly in those days.

Throughout his life, Tisdall kept a diary in the form of notebooks which over the years extended to 25 volumes. Exhibited in a 1988 exhibition, they gave a fascinating, witty and at times wholly irreverent insight into his long career.

He celebrated his 80th birthday two years later with a show at the Albemarle Gallery of work done over 30 years — though mostly since 1966.

If his later work moved

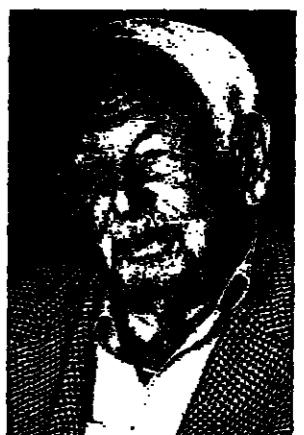
gradually towards an iconic abstraction, it retained always the freshness and enthusiasm of youth. Nor did Tisdall ever seem affected by stiff divisions which conventionally divide art from design, representation from abstraction, or experiment from decoration. He painted until the end of his life. 'If you give up working you become like an old machine gathering dust,' he wrote. 'So like a dancer, you must always hop about or else you'll get stiff.'

In 1941 Tisdall married Isabel Gallegos. In 1964 she started her own weaving company, Tamesis Fabrics, for which Tisdall made many designs. He is survived by her and by their two daughters.

double Wykehamists. He took a first and a second in Mods and Greats, then, after spending some time on the Continent, came top of the Foreign Office (FO) entrance examination.

Entering the FO in 1914, Snow served as a rising young diplomat in Norway, Greece, Switzerland, Spain and Poland, then as a counsellor in Japan. His first posting as a head of mission came in 1935 when he was appointed minister in Cuba, and he moved from there to Finland two years later.

Although he did not seek a second career, Snow led an active social life in retirement — moving home several times around Lake Geneva. Thought to be the oldest former British diplomat, he was a remarkable example of longevity. Not only was he a formidable intellectual whose



range of interests included nuclear physics and metaphysics, but he kept pace with the latest developments in literature and art. He read voraciously in English, French and German and could converse on almost any topic.

At the age of 105 he could still recite verbatim the satirical Latin poem he had composed as an undergraduate about one of Lloyd George's pre-1914 Budgets. Yet he had little time for small talk. He had been brought up to believe that one should speak only when one had something worth saying. He always had something worth saying himself, but it must have been a daunting thought for dinner guests.

The local authorities in Montreux made a fuss of him, sending a birthday card every year since his centenary. When they once asked him what present he would like, he asked for a new fishing licence "so that I might go fishing with my grand-daughter". He had fished throughout the world for most of his life. At 104, however, with failing eyesight, this sounded a somewhat wishful aspiration.

Snow's first marriage was dissolved and he is survived by his second wife Sylvia, a Swiss-Hungarian, whom he married, 1949, and by two sons of his first marriage. A third son died from leukaemia 16 years ago.

HANS TISDALL



Hans Tisdall, artist and designer, died on January 31 aged 86. He was born in Munich on August 14, 1910.

FIRST and foremost a painter, Hans Tisdall was enthralled by the luminosity and grandeur of colour. Yet he also retained a strong figurative streak in his art. Attracted by the control and the certainty of the drawn line, he blended this with a sensuous use of colour and tone in the designs for which he became well known. His murals, mosaics and tapestries adorn the walls of public buildings all over Britain. He also designed what has become the trademark lettering for the book jackets of the publishers Jonathan Cape.

As a teacher for many years at the Central College of Art and Design, Tisdall's sensitivity to the breadth of European culture — he was German by birth — was particularly valuable to his students. Their approach both to life and art became, as the critic Bryan Robinson once put it, 'a little different to what it might have been without his quizzical presence, partly self-deprecating and partly rather grandly dandified', always amused.

Born Hans John Knob Aufseeser, Hans Tisdall as he was later known, came of a family of artists. His parents' studios bewitched him even as a child: 'the easels, multitude of brushes, the canvases and, especially, the lovely smells of turpentine, oil and varnish.' In 1928 he entered Munich's Academy of Fine Arts, and the next year was apprenticed to the sculptor Moisey Kogan, travelling to Paris and

then living in an artists' colony in Ancona on the Adriatic coast, before coming to Britain at the age of 20, in 1930.

His first employment in an advertising agency was very brief — the monotonous discipline did not suit his temperament. So, determining to follow a career as a painter instead, he rented a studio at No 6, Fitzroy Street. Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell lived next door, but although they shared many interests, Tisdall never allowed himself to be lured into Bloomsbury circles.

He preferred to spend time instead by the sea in Hastings, painting the boats and sails and fisherman's nets. The sea and its associated landscapes were always to remain an inspiration to him and later, when his work became more abstract, its motifs and forms could still be traced. Yet Tisdall was not a reclusive man. In his gregarious youth, he said, the only way he could do any work at all was to go up to the studio, lock the door, and turn the key into the garden below.

In 1935 Tisdall was commissioned to produce his first large-scale mural paintings and his first book jackets for Jonathan Cape. The next year he was awarded a Medal of Honour at the International Exhibition in Paris for his work for the British Pavilion.

This was followed by a number of other commissions to decorate clubs and buildings, including, in 1939, to design mural decorations for the liner *Queen Elizabeth*. These were never completed; however, as the ship was converted into a troop carrier for the duration of the war.

Tisdall was enlisted into the

Civil Defence Corps in 1940 from where he went on to work at the Ministry of Information. But he still found time for his painting, completing his bold coloured illustrations to Oliver Hill's children's books *Balbus* (1944) and *Wheels* (1946).

As soon as the war was over

Tisdall mounted his first one-man exhibition in London at the Leger Galleries. It was a success and followed by another the next year. He also began to teach, taking a lectureship at London's Central School of Art and Design in 1947 as well as teaching occasionally at Dartington Hall and in Venice.

The Festival of Britain in

1951 brought two major contributions from Tisdall: the design for the entrance to the fair on the South Bank — a commission which he won in a competition — and another large mural on the same site. A great number of other commissions followed: mosaics, tiles, tapestries and murals for business premises,

and for business premises,

educational establishments and public buildings. His tapestries in particular were admired, with their large-scale patterns abstracted from natural or historical motifs. In 1964 he exhibited at the International Tapestry Biennale in Lausanne, and in 1969 at the International Tapestry Exhibition in New York. He also held several one-man exhibitions of his paintings both in London — at the Reid, Lefevre and Hanover galleries — and abroad, particularly in Düsseldorf.

Throughout his life, Tisdall kept a diary in the form of notebooks which over the years extended to 25 volumes. Exhibited in a 1988 exhibition, they gave a fascinating, witty and at times wholly irreverent insight into his long career. He also exhibited his work in 1988, two years later with a show at the Albemarle Gallery of work done over 30 years — though mostly since 1966.

If his later work moved gradually towards an iconic abstraction, it retained always the freshness and enthusiasm of youth. Nor did Tisdall ever seem affected by stiff divisions which conventionally divide art from design, representation from abstraction, or experiment from decoration. He painted until the end of his life. 'If you give up working you become like an old machine gathering dust,' he wrote. 'So like a dancer, you must always hop about or else you'll get stiff.'

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AIR MARSHAL SIR BARRY DUXBURY

Air Marshal Sir Barry Duxbury, KCB, CBE, director and chief executive of the Society of British Aerospace Companies since 1990, died on January 25 aged 63. He was born on January 23, 1934.

BARRY DUXBURY was one of a small handful of RAF navigators who had climbed to the rank of air marshal and been knighted. He was unusually identified early as a highflier, holding such coveted appointments on the way up as Principal Staff Officer to the Chief of the Air Staff and Secretary to the Chiefs of Staff Committee.

It was the contacts and knowl-

edge of Whitehall that he gained from posts like these which attracted the Society of British Aerospace Companies (SBAC) when the Society was looking for a new chief executive in 1989 — just as Duxbury retired from the services as Air Officer Commanding 18 Group, the

maritime air command in which he had spent the bulk of his RAF career.

The aerospace industry was having to adjust to fiercely competitive new markets as governments in Britain and elsewhere were under pressure to trim their budgets at the end of the Cold War. The SBAC, moreover, had been faced with a special problem of its own, as the Ministry of Defence's plan to close its airfield at Farnborough, Hants, had posed questions about the future of the Farnborough Air Show — the SBAC's two-yearly international show-case. It was against this background that Duxbury began work there seven years ago. He became secretary of the Defence Industries Council at the same time.

Yet John Barry Duxbury had

started his ascent to the top on the bottom rung. Born in Nelson in Lancashire and educated at grammar schools in Nelson itself and at Rossall, Blackpool, he had signed

on for three years in the RAF — instead of the obligatory two years' National Service. Commissioned in 1954 he had then converted to a long-term career. After serving as a navigator in a succession of maritime air squadrons, Duxbury spent some time at Boscombe Down and other trials and experimental establishments.

At one time he was involved with development of the revolutionary strike aircraft the TSR2 — later to be cancelled because of escalating costs in the 1960s.

More significantly, in view of his specialism, he was closely concerned with the emerging jet-powered Nimrod — the maritime patrol aircraft developed on the airframe of the Comet airliner and introduced as a replacement for the turbo-prop Shackleton which was at last being retired after years of stalwart service. The Nimrod has been widely recognised as one of the most successful British defence aircraft since the Second World

War and was a tireless Cold War workhorse.

Duxbury carried out some of the early trials of its navigational equipment and later wrote some of the tactical training manuals.

He did a year at the Canadian Forces Staff College before commanding 201 maritime patrol squadron at Kinloss, then was Principal Staff Officer to Air Chief Marshal Denis Spotswood between 1971 and 1974. He commanded the maritime reconnaissance station RAF St Mawgan in Cornwall as a group captain, 1976-77, and from 1978 to 1980 was Secretary to the Chiefs of Staff Committee. This was an appointment which hugely widened his Whitehall experience, a necessary component of getting into the higher echelons of the Service.

After a year on the directing staff of the Royal College of Defence Studies, he was made Air Secretary — a post in which he was responsible for RAF officers' careers — before moving to his final posting as AOC 18 Group in 1986. The job which involves working closely alongside the Royal Navy, also gave him a Nato 'hat' as Commander Maritime Air Eastern Atlantic and Channel. It brought him back to that part of the Air Force with which he was most familiar, and which he most enjoyed.

Barry Duxbury was a well-liked, unpretentious officer — far removed from the extrovert image of the fighter pilot. His style was one of quiet authority, which was leavened by great kindness — exemplified during his two years as Air Secretary.

Off-duty he painted landscapes in oils and indulged his passion for photography. He was also a keen radio ham.

A close family man, he is survived by his wife Joan, whom he married when he was 20, and by their son.

UNEMPLOYED PROCESSION IN THE WEST END

Organised by the London and District Right to Work Council, a demonstration of wives and children of the unemployed took place yesterday afternoon in the West End. The council provided the railway fares, and the women and children came in large numbers from various parts of London. About 2,000 women, most of them with one or more children, making up 5,000 in all, assembled in Cavendish Square, where they formed in procession.

Several banners were carried, one bearing the words 'Work or Revolution: Which? The Government must decide', and another 'Help the poor who help themselves'. The party from Poplar had a banner with the inscriptions 'Poplar women demand work or food; let the rich remember our destination is the price paid for luxury; think of our 100,000 children who go to school hungry every day'. With the party were several members of the Poplar board of guardians.

Shortly after 3 o'clock the procession started for the Horticultural Hall, Westminster, whence it was arranged to send delegations to the House of Commons. Marching six abreast, and carrying one man to retire to rescue him.

A large number of the public accompanied

ON THIS DAY

February 17, 1909

MISS TITA BRAND'S RECITAL

For one person to read *Macbeth* throughout is a Herculean task; and candidly, we do not think Miss Brand was wise to undertake it at her third recital at the Aeolian Hall. Tragedy depends for its impressiveness upon an accumulated effect, a sequence of events from which there is no escape for the chief characters. Such an effect can hardly be obtained by a reading, however, unspareful of the interpreter. Miss Brand made full use of her commanding presence, steady gestures and historic capability, and succeeded in giving a mark of vividness to certain episodes but it was beyond her power to make the various characters live before us.

NEWS

Tory beef deal bid to buy votes

■ Douglas Hogg will today announce the first steps towards lifting the beef ban in Northern Ireland in a blatant attempt to enlist support from the Ulster Unionists in tonight's censure vote.

Ministers denied that any deals were being done. But with all parties claiming a full turnout for the vote on the handling of the BSE crisis, the nine Ulster Unionists, with just one Tory rebel, could determine the government's fate. Page 1

Prowler fear girl, 13, murdered

■ Police were trying to identify a man with a scarred face who called on at least one house in a street minutes before Billie-Jo Jenkins, 13, was bludgeoned to death in the garden of her home in Hastings, east Sussex. The attack followed worries by her foster family about prowlers near the house. Page 1

Exam failure

A degree examination included a question from a ten-year-old A-level paper, highlighting fears that university standards are falling. Page 1

Spice Girls' success

British balance of trade figures will be rosier next month thanks to the Spice Girls, the pop group which yesterday topped the American charts with *Wannabe*. Page 1

Britons sentenced

Three Britons were among twelve people sentenced in Cairo to jail with hard labour for smuggling Egyptian antiquities out of the country. Experts said the case highlighted the threat from art thieves to Pharaonic treasures despite new security measures. Page 3

Victims beat HIV

Two men who recovered after being infected by the Aids virus HIV are giving scientists clues that could lead to better treatments for the disease. Page 4

Glorious Chipmunk

The Chipmunk trainer that has served the Army and RAF for 50 years is to leave the Colours this summer after a final trail-blazing flight to America. Page 4

Oxford fees

Oxford is to examine a call by senior dons that it should charge students course fees of up to £8,000. Page 5

Why Quentin Crisp is gay but unhappy

■ Quentin Crisp, 88, famously known as "the great stately homo of England", has called for babies with a "gay gene" to be aborted because he believes the world would be better without homosexuals. He said he often wished he had never been born and had been unhappy with his sexuality since he was a six-year-old. Page 7



Scramble start: More than 750 motorcyclists begin the 22nd annual Enduro race in the sand at Le Touquet, France, yesterday.

BUSINESS

Telecom deal: Downward pressure on the cost of telephone calls is set to continue after a landmark agreement to bring free trade to the world's £375 billion telecommunications market. Page 44

Opera double: The Welsh National Opera unveils its unconventional new production of *Carmen* at the New Theatre in Cardiff, while Birmingham sees an unmissable staging of *Macbeth*, courtesy of the City of Birmingham Touring Opera. Page 16

Oil takeover: Gulf Canada Resources looks set to win its £494 million battle for control of Clyde Petroleum, the British oil and gas company. Page 44

Belfast jobs: The Northern Ireland economy will receive a boost when Shorts, the aircraft builder, is expected to create more than 1,000 jobs in Belfast. Page 44

Global car crime: Car theft, often organised by Russian gangs, is now as big an international problem as drug smuggling, says a survey by a London-based group. Page 10

Zaire private army: Businessmen in Zaire's richest province of Shaba plan to pay their own army to recapture towns lost to rebels. Page 11

Korea shooting: South Korea accused North Korea of trying to kill a long-staying defector to the south as a stand-off continued in Beijing. Page 12

Weather by Fax: Dial 0236 followed by area number from your fax. West Country 416 236, Scotland 416 340, Northern Ireland 416 235, Midlands 416 236, London 416 242, East Anglia 416 337, National Grid 416 238, Weather picture 416 287, Merchant Marine 416 200, before 10am Americas 416 200.

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TIMES SPORT

MONDAY FEBRUARY 17 1997

FAVOURITES FIND IT TOUGH GOING IN THE FA CUP OF SURPRISES



The Chelsea defence looks disbelievingly as Newton, second from right, slices the ball past Hitchcock for the own goal that gave Leicester a late equaliser at Filbert Street. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

Newton's flaw holds Chelsea

Leicester City 2
Chelsea 2

By ROB HUGHES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THE glorious uncertainty that is the FA Cup competition for 1996-97 reached a crescendo over the weekend and Leicester City's escape from being two goals down to the Latin influence of Chelsea was thoroughly in keeping with the times. This, by any other name, was Leicester reserves: the spine had been torn out of their team with four key players suspended, three more injured and first-year professionals asked to come in from the cold to play with effort and élan against a Chelsea team that had impudently dismissed Liverpool in the previous round.

What a great shame it was, therefore, that the first goal of yesterday afternoon, a wonderful shot of precision and brutal striking power from Roberto Di Matteo, should bring sustained fighting behind the Leicester goal, fighting that takes this great game back to the liguidness of the 1980s, when football almost became a sport to shun.

There are no excuses, no apologies that can mean very much. What appeared to happen was that, because of poor segregation, a few Chelsea supporters sitting among the Leicester crowd leapt up in celebration and that was deemed sufficient to spark unbridled fistfights between so-called supporters of both sides.

Worse, it would not be quelled for six minutes while the game played on and it endangered the handicapped people who sat in wheelchairs where the violence was taking

place and the women who ran on to the pitch in understandable panic.

Given reports that Italy supporters had been similarly set upon by louts wearing England colours in Wembley Stadium last Wednesday, the awfulness of the week just past is a stark reminder to everyone that hooliganism has not been outgrown by English society, merely policed into a relatively unseen state. It does England's bid to host the 2006 World Cup little credit.

But to fighting of a more legitimate kind, Chelsea, as they proved against Liverpool, are a Cup side of halves. Before the interval, at times strolling around with arrogance in their touch and sweet harmony at their command, they looked, in a different

league to Leicester. This, of course, was because the Foxes were so lame, bereft of Izet, Lemon, Elliott and, above all, the wonderful hunger of their teenager, Heskey.

Thus were Leicester put into the category of Foxes playing Cup underdogs. Yet the Leicester crowd would not settle for surrender. Nor even after Di Matteo's splendid goal in the fifteenth minute and not after a second, classic counter-attack, had put Chelsea even further ahead after 35 minutes.

The continental players lacked such movement and class into that second goal. It had started when Grayson, a right-footed player attempting to fill Leicester's left-wing berth, mishit a cross straight to Newton. From him, via Di

Matteo, the ball was quickly dispatched to Petrescu.

The Romanian rushed towards the remnants of the Leicester defence, drew players towards him on the inside, and then pushed the ball with the outside of his foot through to Hughes. The Welshman, 15 yards out, shot from an anda-

cious angle but with power enough along the ground to defeat Keller.

"I didn't want to go out of the FA Cup so quickly," Leicester's articulate manager, Martin O'Neill, said. The adrenalin flowed. Perhaps Chelsea thought they had done enough, perhaps Zola and Di Matteo, both later withdrawn, were tired after the international on Wednesday and doubtless the ensuing Indian celebrations.

But a glance at the substitutes' benches still legislated against the home team coming back: Leicester had Stuart Wilson, a first-year professional, Jamie Lawrence, a Caribbean player who seldom gets much practice, and Sam McMahon, a player recalled from a loan spell with Kettering

Town. Chelsea, by contrast, were able to call on Gianluca Vialli and Ruud Gullit.

So, the contest appeared unequal. Nobody told that to Garry Parker, a player the wrong side of 30, whose sometimes eloquent direction in midfield has been nullified by a perceived lack of combative instinct.

In the 52nd minute Parker

had struck a free kick from wide on the left, a clever, flighted cross towards the far post. Hitchcock was negligent, or simply bemused; but when he failed to reach for the ball, Walsh, Leicester's spirited captain, met the ball with the full force of his forehead and the goal was inevitable.

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Nevertheless, with Chelsea's expensive substitutes now on the field, hope bordering on desperation, hauled Leicester on towards the climax. It came three minutes from the final whistle. Clarke was booked for a late tackle on Clarke. Parker guided his free kick this time from the right and Newton turned the ball into his own net.

That was it, a strange kind of equality, the violence now happily subsided and a replay date fixed for February 26, where Gullit believes home advantage will put his team comfortably through to the quarter-finals, away to Portsmouth. Gullit, indeed, suggested that Leicester had survived without merit. "Is that right?" rejoined O'Neill. "Well, try to bring the first team down to London for the replay."

Wimbledon, the second favourites at 4-1, and Middlesbrough both have ambitions of a cup double, having already reached the semi-finals of the Coca-Cola Cup. Both must travel: Wimbledon to Sheffield Wednesday and Middlesbrough to the winners of the delayed fifth-round tie between Derby County and Coventry City.

their third sixth-round appearance, having already won at West Ham, United and Birmingham City.

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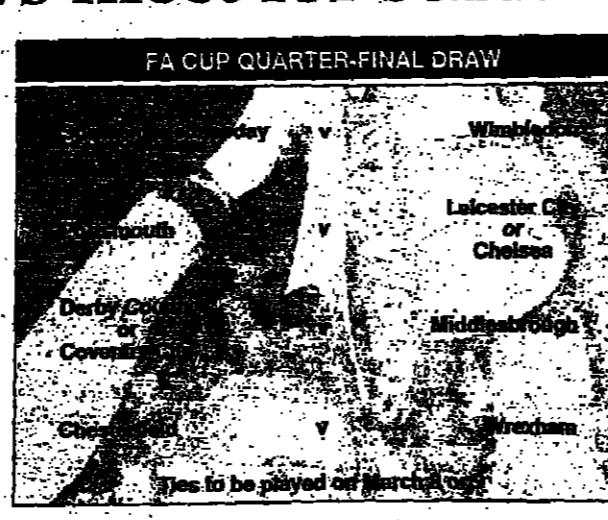
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By PETER BAILLIE

A TEAM from the Nationwide League second division team is guaranteed a place in the FA Cup semi-finals this season. Yesterday's draw paired Chesterfield with Wrexham in the sixth round of the competition, to be played on March 8 and 9.

It will be the first time a club from this level has reached the semi-finals, since Plymouth Argyle, then of the old third division, did so in 1984. In all, only six have done so, with none reaching the final itself.

Chesterfield's win over Nottingham Forest on Saturday took them into the sixth round for the first time. Now, with home advantage, they can dream of greater glory. However, Wrexham are renowned cup fighters and are making

both sides but obviously better for us as we are at home. In the last few years I don't think we have beaten them. But the incentive to win is enormous for both of us. There is no disappointment in

the fact we haven't got one of the big clubs."

The third Nationwide League team to survive, Portsmouth, of the first division, were rewarded for their outstanding win at Leeds with a home tie in which they will meet the winners of the replay between Leicester City and Chelsea. In spite of letting slip a two-goal lead yesterday, Chelsea are 9-4 favourites to win the competition for the first time since 1970.

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Sky's undertakers lose out in panel game

Been a good week for the Italians, hasn't it? Des Lynam twinkled after Roberto Di Matteo eased Chelsea into the lead at Fulbert Street yesterday. Indeed it had, especially if you caught a glimpse of Lazio against Internazionale on Channel 4 yesterday. But it was also a week of mixed fortunes for our broadcasters, with Sky showing once again that, while its cheque book can virtually guarantee top-class sporting action, it still lags miserably behind the BBC when it comes to turning a fixture into an occasion.

Last Wednesday, for instance, a peak audience of four million would have been hard-pressed to criticise Sky's coverage of England against Italy on technical grounds, but when it came to critical content ... well, where do we start?

Ray Wilkins, Joe Royle and Bryan Robson sat there like three depressed undertakers. They may have captured the mood of the nation, but it was the sort of television that made you glad to see Jimmy Hill.

John Motson and Trevor Brooking had to settle for second best and recorded highlights for *Sportsnight* on BBC1, but the post-match analysis from the Euro 96 team of Hill, Hansen and Gullit was excellent. While never losing sight of the need to be critical, it was positive, upbeat and, as far as circumstances would allow, fun. Whether it was enough fun for Ruud Gullit to enjoy a free 15-minute commercial for his own-label leisure-wear, however, is another matter. A less charismatic individual would not have got away with it.

Charisma, though, is what



MATTHEW BOND

TV ACTION REPLAY

television sport is increasingly about, a fact that Sky must recognise. On Wednesday, it had a reasonable commentary team (Trevor Francis may have been the right nationality, but he was a poor substitute for Andy Gray alongside Martin Tyler), and a decent enough presenter in Richard Keys, but once again struggled to field pundits that its viewers might actually be pleased to see.

James Richardson, presenter of *Gazzetta Football Italia*, has charisma, albeit of a

rather unorthodox Channel 4 variety. Saturday was the big day of his season as he gave British viewers the Italian view (cue opera and supporters celebrating in Rome pizza) of the 'Zola flair that left the Wembley assembly trembly'.

Not even these silky smooth verbal skills can guarantee success, however. The problem was that Richardson's special guest was Paul Ince, a player whose television interviewing technique is almost definitely limited. Sprawled with

one leg over the arm of his chair (not a pretty sight), Ince dispatched Richardson's questions with the bare minimum of effort: 'Basically, it was a case of who scored the first goal.' Thanks heavens for Kenneth Wolstenholme and his extended highlights.

One of the many things that Richardson did not discover from this interview was that Ince would not be playing in Channel 4's live game yesterday afternoon, between Lazio and Internazionale. Never mind, he and Paul Elliott put a brave presentational face on Ince's absence and Peter Brackley and Luther Blissett provided commentary on the weekly game that provides one of the great unsung assets of terrestrial television. Not just very good football, but live very good football. If only we could decide which team to

Hingis makes it four out of four

MARTINA HINGIS maintained her unbeaten record this year by winning the final of the women's Paris Open yesterday. Hingis, 16, beat Anke Huber, of Germany, 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 to win her fourth tournament in succession. The Swiss, who rose to No 2 in the world after winning the Australian Open last month, took less than half an hour to win the first set but conceded the second when she found trouble holding her service. Huber then struggled with her service in the decisive third set and although Hingis needed a slice of luck to move to match point courtesy of a favourable net-cord, she finished the match with aplomb.

Thomas Enqvist, of Sweden, won the men's tournament in

Marseille yesterday when his opponent Marcelo Rios, of Chile, retired early in the second set. Rios, the No 1 seed,

pulled a muscle in his left leg during his semi-final match against Sergi Bruguera, of Spain, on Saturday and finally gave into the injury at 6-4 and 1-0 down to Enqvist.

Marshall fights back

SQUASH: Peter Marshall continued his attempt to return to the top of the sport after nearly two years out of the game with chronic fatigue syndrome with victories over Paul Johnson, the Kent No 1, and David Campion, the Yorkshire No 1, in the National Squash Federation inter-county finals at the Howdon club in Beckenham, Kent. The former world No 2 changed county registration from Leicestershire to Nottinghamshire this year and led his new colleagues into their first inter-county final by defeating Kent 3-2 on Saturday. However, Campion's lower order for Yorkshire, the defending champions, was too strong for Nottinghamshire yesterday and they took the final 4-1.

Sorenstam's bright day

GOLF: Annika Sorenstam, aiming for her second tournament win of the year, shot a three-under-par 69 to open a three-stroke lead at the end of the second round of the Los Angeles women's championship. Sorenstam, of Sweden, finished her round as darkness fell, making it difficult to gauge distances from the fairway and the break on the greens. However, she still managed to par the final five holes and was nine under at 135 after two rounds of the three-day event. Ellie Gibson, without a win in her seven years on the LPGA Tour, was second on 138 after a 69.

Christie powers home

ATHLETICS: Linford Christie won the 100 metres at the Hobart Grand Prix meeting yesterday in a time of 10.30sec. Christie, 36, powered home to defeat Steve Brimacombe, of Australia, who recorded 10.4sec. Patrick Stevens, of Belgium, and Gis Netha, from New Zealand, finished in a dead heat for third in 10.4sec. Keith Cullen, of Britain, finished second in the Chiba international cross-country race in Japan. The race was won by Mathias Ntawulikura, of Rwanda, in 35min 50sec over the 12-kilometre course. Cullen finished in 36min 12sec.

Britons miss bronze

HOCKEY: Old Loughoniens had to settle for fourth place in the European indoor club championship in Cologne yesterday, losing 11-4 in the play-off for bronze. Slagelse, the Danish champions, won their country's first European club medal by comprehensively beating the Old Boys. The Essex side missed out on a penalty corner in the opening minute, and never recovered from a second-minute penalty stroke against them. Insights Memes Hill won the bronze medal at the B division event in Budapest yesterday.

Fraction beats Jackson

ATHLETICS: Colin Jackson, of Wales, was beaten by the closest of margins by Allen Johnson, of the United States, in the 60 metres hurdles in Lievin, France, yesterday. The Olympic high hurdles champion was declared the winner after both athletes finished in 7.53sec. The pair, who are heading for a showdown in the world indoor championships in Paris next month, both thought they had won after crossing the line together. Jackson set a time of 7.46sec in Stuttgart last month in an encouraging return to form.

Deakin retains title

CURLING: Martyn Deakin's Wigan and Haig team held off a challenge from the English junior squad, led by Mark Copperhead, to retain the English curling title at Perth. With both teams winning three out of four round robin matches, the decision went to a play-off, where Deakin beat Copperhead's rink 7-2. Joan Reed, from Berwick, won the women's title for the fifth time.

Lynch rescues leaders

CROSSES: Cheadle, the premier division leaders, dropped their first point of the season when Holmes held them to a 9-9 draw at Sale on Saturday. Cheadle are still unbeaten after 15 league games, but Holmes, who led 4-5 at one stage, nearly destroyed their record. Cheadle were rescued by Phil Lynch, who scored four goals in the dying minutes.

GOLF

Price storms to victory

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

Price had completed nine unimpressive holes in the regulation 36.

When play resumed after the next five holes to reinforce his position.

He said: 'When they asked us on 17 if we wanted to carry on playing because it was getting dark, I ran from the tee to my ball.'

'I was just really happy we finished today, even though on my last putt I couldn't really see.'

In spite of Price's poor

performance on the front nine, none of his rivals were able to take advantage. Frost, who started the day on 11-under, had an eventful round liberally sprinkled with birdies and bogeys.

The South African also seemed to be inspired by the lightning and recorded birdies on the 10th, 12th, and 14th holes, but then promptly bogeyed the 15th and 16th.

Thomas Bjorn, of Denmark, was also unable to capitalise on Price's early slump. Three birdies and three bogeys saw him finish third on 27.

Padraig Harrington, of Ireland, who started the final round on his own in second position, on 12-under, struggled to a three-over-par 75, which included bogeys on the final two holes.

Harrington finished on 27, sharing fourth position with Ronnie McCann, of the United States, Stephen Ames, of Trinidad and Tobago, Wayne Westmore, of South Africa, and Mark McNulty, of Zimbabwe.

It was Price's first tournament victory since the Zimbabwe Open in December 1995.

TENNIS

Agassi follows Chang into Rusedski's bag

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

GREG RUSEDSKI provided a glowing advertisement for the benefits of self-denial by achieving the most spectacular of his career in the Sybase Open yesterday. Rusedski, the British No 2, beat Andre Agassi, the former world No 1, 6-3, 6-4 in the semi-finals of the tournament at the San Jose Arena, California.

Rusedski followed up his straight-sets victory over Michael Chang, the world No 2, in the quarter-final with a performance that underlined his determination to add greater variety to his game. His opponent in the final is Pete Sampras, the world No 1.

Rusedski said his willingness to devote his Christmas holiday to extra work on his game was beginning to pay dividends. He and Brian Teacher, his coach, had spent 27 days in Los Angeles, working in four-hour sessions, hitting top-spin backhands and service returns.

It was Rusedski's service, pinpoint volleying and low backhand slice that enabled him to break down Agassi. He produced 14 aces and was timed at 139mph. His service is yet to be broken in the tournament.

Rusedski, ranked No 39 in the world, is well aware that victory in the final would

considerably enhance both his ranking and standing in the game. 'Nobody could say I'm a fluke if I beat Chang, Agassi and Sampras in a row,' he said. 'That would establish me as a true threat to anybody.'

Despite never having beaten Agassi before, Rusedski broke him in the first set at 3-2 in a ten-stroke rally from the baseline and then broke him at 2-2 in the second with a down-the-line forehand return which was an outright winner. 'I favour myself indoors

against anyone,' he said. 'I rallied well with Andre. He didn't expect my ground game to be so good.' Rusedski gave notice of his improvement last month by reaching the final of the Croatia indoor tournament, in which he lost to Goran Ivanisevic.

Agassi, though, remained sceptical about Rusedski's ability to join the game's elite, although he did concede that he has improved his service selection. 'It depends on what he's trying to accomplish,' Agassi said. 'If you beat a guy like Chang and me back-to-back, sure, that is going to do a lot for your confidence. But it

against anyone,' he said. 'I rallied well with Andre. He didn't expect my ground game to be so good.' Rusedski gave notice of his improvement last month by reaching the final of the Croatia indoor tournament, in which he lost to Goran Ivanisevic.

The last time that Muster appeared here, 12 months ago, his pride was still suffering from the attacks made by Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi, who claimed that he could win matches only on clay and that he had no right to be the world No 1. Last night he proved that

he is a champion on any surface. In 14 hours he showed to everybody that winning is what he does best and that there is far more to his game and his character than a powerful physique and the ability to run.

It was a match of tension, nerves and muscle, and for Ivanisevic there were times when it was all too much.

In the first set he let four break

points slip away, and after the fourth, he threw his racket away in disgust, missing a ball boy by inches, and received a code violation for racket abuse.

Five games later he was broken for the first time, despite serving two aces to take his tally to 12, and blew a fuse. He threw his racket high into the air towards the crowd, stormed back to his seat and kicked his bottle of water away. This earned him a further code violation for unsportsmanlike conduct and a point penalty.

With the first set gone and the temper tantrums done with, Ivanisevic and Muster settled down to a battle of power and nerve. Ivanisevic has never been the subtlest of players — serve hard and

whenever you see the ball belt it good and hard — but, against Muster, who will run until he drops to retrieve the most impossible of lost causes, the result was bound to come down to a couple of points and a little luck.

Ivanisevic kept pace with Muster stroke for stroke from the baseline as the second set progressed, producing his best tennis of the week. The ace came when he needed them, but the luck was missing. Twice he had a set point on Muster's service to level the scores, but twice the net-cord robbed him of his chance. As

the players scrambled across the baseline forcing every point and hitting the ball harder and harder, they were forced into a tie-break.

Neither was prepared to concede an inch and Ivanisevic, who has a habit of falling apart under such pressure, passed the test of character with flying colours. Unfortunately for him, though, Muster proved the stronger. Falling 3-0 behind and ending up flat on his back as he raced to scramble back yet another Muster forehand, it was all over bar the shouting.

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When play resumed after the next five holes to reinforce his position.

He said: 'When they asked us on 17 if we wanted to carry on playing because it was getting dark, I ran from the tee to my ball.'

'I was just really happy we finished today, even though on my last putt I couldn't really see.'

In spite of Price's poor

MOTOR RACING

Williams silent on 'debris'

By OLIVER HOLT

THE Williams Formula One team last night refused to say whether they would use a photograph published in *The Sunday Times* yesterday as evidence in the defence of three of their top officials who are accused of the manslaughter of the late, three times world champion, Ayrton Senna.

The picture, taken by the French motor racing photographer, Paul-Henri Cahier, and never before published, shows a fragment of debris apparently lying in the path of Senna's Williams-Renault shortly before it crashed at the Tamburello corner during the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix, killing the Brazilian driver.

It is possible that Senna ran over the debris, which appears by its colour to have become detached from the Benetton driven by JJ Lehto after the Finn was involved in a start-line accident with the Lotus of Pedro Lamy. The Brazilian may have damaged a tyre in the process or swerved to avoid it and lost control over the bumps in the turn into the corner as a result.

compelling evidence to refute the theory about the steering column and that he was some form of contact. But the evidence is so circumstantial that it is unlikely to have much bearing on the trial of Frank Williams, the Williams team owner, Patrick Head, the technical director, Adrian Newey, the car's designer, and three race officials, which begins in Imola on Thursday.

If anything, it may strengthen the Williams case slightly but neither the picture, nor the outlandish theory put forward in the same article that Senna might have blacked out because he had been holding his breath, is likely to provoke as much debate as the assertion of the prosecution that the steering column on Senna's car snapped as he tried to negotiate the bend at more than 190mph. He died of massive head injuries.

At the Williams annual press lunch for the British press last week, Head hinted that their defence team had

SKIING

Bronze medal helps to salvage Tomba's pride

ALBERTO TOMBA salvaged some of his reputation on the final day of the Alpine skiing world championships in Sestriere by recovering to take a bronze in the slalom on the final day of the event.

He and Krista Ghedina, in the downhill, who also won bronze, were the only Italian men to win medals in Sestriere. The women did the rest with three golds and a silver. Only the Norwegians, with three men's golds and three silvers, finished above the host nation in the final table.

Pernilla Wiberg, of Sweden, the overall World Cup leader, also left it to the last day to take her medal. She won a downhill bronze, but was delighted with what was her first medal in a speed discipline.

Hilary Lindh, of the United States, shared the headlines on the final day by winning the women's downhill title. The result represented a remarkable comeback by Lindh, who won bronze last year, after she contemplated retirement earlier in the season.

He withdrew from the first leg of the giant slalom last Wednesday and looked as if he was heading for the loss of face that he had dreaded.

However, he fought off the effects of an illness that had looked likely to force his withdrawal, to take the bronze behind Tom Stiansen, of Norway, who won the gold medal.

Results, page 32

Price storms to victory

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

Price had completed nine unimpressive holes in the regulation 36.

When play resumed after the next five holes to reinforce his position.

He said: 'When they asked

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New Zealand's second-innings collapse leaves final Test delicately balanced

Spin bowlers restore England's hopes

FROM ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT
IN CHRISTCHURCH

CHRISTCHURCH (third day): New Zealand, with four second-innings wickets standing, lead England by 213 runs

CRICKET has never depended exclusively on quality for its drama and two indifferent teams have injected the dying days of this series with ariosity, uncertainty and no little excitement. The standard of the game may have been largely undistinguished but the final Test has lacked nothing in incident.

Yesterday began with Michael Atherton, once more cast as a hero in adversity, becoming only the seventh Englishman to carry his bat through a Test innings. It ended with one New Zealander refusing to walk on being given out and another bating with a broken hand as their control of the match was eroded by England's spin bowlers.

The confrontational tone of the contest was set long before Bryan Young declined to acknowledge that a catch at silly point by Nick Knight had been taken cleanly and that the umpire, Darrel Hair, had raised his finger. Young stood his ground until Hair, betraying doubt, walked across to square leg, consulted with his colleague, Steve Dumaine, and confirmed the decision. It seemed, at the time, a blatant transgression of the code of conduct, though some of the behaviour that preceded it was scarcely more attractive.

Here, as in Wellington last week, there has been a simmering hostility between the sides, a sense of straining for excessive aggression to compensate for limited ability. Some of the words exchanged, notably between Dominic Cork and Adam Parore, were cheap of origin and childish of nature. By last night, the involvement of the match referee was inevitable.

With that said, New Zealand, their stock subterranean as the game approached, have rallied with spirit. Whatever the result, they have given England a fight, one they plainly needed. As so often in the wake of a win, England's cricket submitted to complicity, with potential consequences paradoxically direst for the man who did most to deliver them from the mess.

To state that Atherton thrives in such situations has become a cliché of the game. He has risen to daunting challenges so frequently now that it seems his technique is refined under duress, his hunger sharpened by the adrenalin of danger. He was six runs away from his first century of a personally unproductive



Atherton stands alone, awaiting the arrival of yet another partner during his defiant unbeaten innings of 94. Photograph: Graham Chadwick / Allsport

winter, and still batting with an untroubled calm, when the last of his inadequate partners departed.

Defeat here would affect no one more harshly than Atherton. Only days ago, he was apparently being endorsed for another summer as captain but to lose with ignominy at the end of a series that has otherwise been dominated by his team would be a severe blow to his stature and support. Having invited trouble by putting in New Zealand, then watching his fast bowlers compound the error by pitching dim-wittedly short, he could hardly have done more to prevent it.

Last night, Atherton was blamed in his criticisms of England's cricket over the first two days. "The pitch didn't do a right lot," he offered by way of defence for his toss decision. "We bowled a bit short early on," he conceded of his errant

attack. And the batting? "A little bit indiscriminate ... but we have got another chance to put that right."

Discipline in fact was absent from the England innings, virtually whenever Atherton himself was not on strike. From the moment on Saturday afternoon when Knight fell in a frenetic style now worryingly familiar, to the crux of the afternoon after lunch yesterday when Phillip Tufnell, the No 11, scampered last-ball singles as if intent on fanning the strike from a captain six hours into his act, this was frail, characterless batting.

Alec Stewart played as if he felt indestructible; Nasser Hussain and John Crawley were both guilty of careless driving; Graham Thorpe played on to a change bowler recently derided by the England coach. Then, perhaps most reprehensible of all, Cork played a hot-headed, short, he could hardly have done more to prevent it.

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poorly executed pull to the fifth ball of the morning yesterday and was caught behind.

Minutes earlier, Cork had been telling viewers of Sky Television that he intended to get his head down and support his captain. He obviously had a short memory. "It happens," Atherton shrugged later. But, in such circumstances, it should not happen.

Cork's aberration left England 145 for six, an intimidating distance short of a New Zealand total to which they had generously donated. Defence of great resolution was required and, for 85 minutes, Atherton found stoical support from Robert Croft.

This has been a fine game

for Croft and his batting exhibited all the virtues that his supposed betters had ignored. His shot selection was sound and he offered the full face of the bat to everything. Only his dismissal, after a stand worth 53, was laughable as a slow, high full toss from Aslie was spooned to mid-on.

Atherton was now unable to keep the strike as Darren Gough and Andy Caddick fell cheaply and Tufnell played his cameo, full of confidence if short on tactical sense. When it was over, Atherton was left as the first Englishman since Stewart against Pakistan, at Lord's five years ago, to bat through a Test innings. I wonder if he felt much satisfaction.

The plain fact is that New Zealand had outbowled England, as well as outbatting them. A lead of 118, with more than half the playing hours to come, was an enviable advantage but Atherton's captaincy was now reflected in his oratory as well as his example.

"I told them to remember Port Elizabeth last year, when we were 160 behind and then had South Africa 60 for six," he said. It was a speech of startling effect.

Cork struck with his fourth ball, Pocock unsure whether to play a stroke or not and making a nonsense of the compromise. New Zealand would have been nought for two if Knight had clung on to a one-handed slip chance offered by Young off Caddick but Parore, restored to No 3, made little headway before falling to Gough in the final over before tea.

The final session was England's best of the match. Croft and Tufnell operated together, probing and pressuring, and New Zealand reacted nervously. Their position gradually collapsed as four close catches were taken, three of them by Knight. By the close, the spinners had shared 38 overs and taken four wickets for 49 and Matt Horne was wincing with pain at every defensive push. The game was in the balance, which is perhaps more than England could have expected a few hours earlier.

Three balls later Bevan was trapped leg-before by Kallis with his second ball of the innings to leave the Australians on 34 for two.

After a brief 37-run stand between Blewett (39 not out) and Healy, the Australians lost two wickets in three balls to Kallis.

□ Zimbabwe secured a 1-0 one-day series victory over India after a waterlogged pitch forced the scheduled second game, at the Harare Sports Club, to be abandoned yesterday. The washout gives Zimbabwe their second successive home victory in a one-day series after their 3-0 victory over England last month. Zimbabwe won the opening match on Saturday by eight wickets after rain reduced their target to 136 in 38 overs. It was only their second one-day win over India in 15 attempts.

Scoreboard, page 32



Taylor: 85 in first innings

Young walks out of trouble

BRYAN YOUNG, the New Zealand opening batsman, escaped without punishment at Lancaster Park yesterday after committing one of the fundamental sins of cricket by refusing to leave the field on being given out (Alan Lee writes).

This lenient treatment was announced, after a disciplinary hearing, by the match referee, Peter Burge, the same man who heavily fined Michael Atherton, the England captain, at the Oval in 1994 when his alleged dissent extended to shaking his head and looking at his bat after being adjudged leg-before.

The incident occurred late

on the third day of the final Test as England, having conceded a first-innings lead of 118, recovered ground rapidly.

Young was fifth out, one short of his half-century, but he plainly disputed the legality of Nick Knight's catch at silly point off the bowling of Phil Tufnell.

Knight plunged low to scoop

up the chance off bat and pad and the Australian umpire, Darrel Hair, immediately upheld the appeal. Young, however, simply stood and shook his head, believing that the catch had been taken on the half-volley. Television replays showed him saying: "He didn't catch that. No way."

When it was clear Young had no intention of walking, Hair compromised his own position by consulting with his square-leg colleague, Steve Dumaine, before raising his finger again. This time Young marched off without hesitation.

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Officials warn Smith to comply with regulations on drugs testing



Eyes of the world are upon Smith as she raises her arms after winning another title in Atlanta

Michelle Smith, the Ireland swimmer who won three Olympic titles and a bronze medal in Atlanta last summer, has been warned by FINA, the international governing body, that she is one infringement away from possible sanction, including suspension from the sport.

The move comes six months after Smith's phenomenal progress became the talking point of the Games, provoking questions about drugs. Smith, then 26, strenuously denied she had ever taken banned substances, putting her success down to hard work.

The warning from FINA follows Smith's failure to make herself available for a drugs test on October 13 last year. It is the latest in a series of communications to the Irish Amateur Swimming Association (IASA) from FINA expressing concern over difficulties testers have had when

trying to contact Smith out of competition.

FINA rules brought in at the Atlanta Olympic Games are clear: if a swimmer fails to appear for out-of-competition testing twice, the national federation will be made aware. If the swimmer cannot be located on one further occasion, they could be considered to "have refused to submit to doping control". The penalty, a four-year suspension from the sport, is the same as for those who test positive for anabolic steroids.

FINA documents obtained by *The Times* show that testers from International Doping Tests and Management (IDTM), arrived unannounced at Smith's residence in Celbridge, Co Kildare, at 3.30pm on October 13. All top 50 swimmers in the world must supply details of their daily movements to their national federations.

However, IDTM's report to FINA states: "Michelle has

not returned from the USA. She did not return until October 15." The no-show is in clear contravention of FINA rules. On January 16, FINA wrote to the IASA noting its rules and attaching the IDTM report form for "an unavailable athlete". FINA states that "regarding Michelle Smith" the IASA should note that "in order to prevent any sanction to the future, it is important that each swimmer be responsible for informing his/her federation of his/her schedule and that the information is forwarded to FINA in time."

The drive to increase out-of-competition testing followed events in 1994, when seven Chinese swimmers tested positive for anabolic steroids out of competition.

FINA's letter of last month

refers to an earlier one sent to the IASA on September 13, 1996, expressing concern with Smith's address form, which requests precise details of where swimmers can be found on any given day. "The information is rather vague and on the second page, the daily calendar is not filled out," FINA says.

A year before the latest warning, on January 17, 1996, FINA had informed the IASA that IDTM had "tried to contact in the first three quarters of 1995, at the address provided, the following swimmers and unfortunately, she was unattainable: Ms Michelle Smith."

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FINA's letter of last month

reported to be found, the swimmer may be sanctioned". At the time, that provided for a suspension of up to two years.

It was in 1995 that Smith made her big breakthrough, winning the 200 metres butterfly, 200 metres medley and finishing runner-up to the 400 metres medley at the European championships in Vienna. She was accompanied in Austria by her coach since 1993 and the man she would marry, Erik de Bruin, former Dutch shot put and discus champion who was suspended from athletics for four years in August 1993 after a drug test revealed an elevated level of testosterone and human chorionic gonadotrophin, a banned substance.

De Bruin now faces a ban from swimming because of an incident that took place in Vienna. He accompanied Smith to doping control as her representative. He said, however, that he had lost his

credentials and gave testers a false name, according to Harm Beyer, the member of FINA and the European Swimming League, who now heads the FINA Doping Commission set up in Atlanta to judge doping cases.

Beyer has said that the League would "not be ready to give him any credentials any more without clarifying what happened in Vienna". The statement has particular importance as the European championships take place in Seville, Spain, in August.

Smith has always maintained that she is against the use of drugs. Since 1994, she has faced questions about de Bruin and her vast progress. In 1995, she set an Irish record over 400 metres free-style of 4min 26.18sec, a time that did not rank her among the world's top 150. Fifteen months later, she clocked 4min 07.25sec for victory in Atlanta at the age of 26. The sport had seen nothing like it.

S Africa struggle to resolve problem at No 3

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

WESTERN Province made a bold, early declaration yesterday and then took four Australian second-innings wickets to set up an intriguing conclusion to the three-day match in Cape Town.

After John Commins, the captain, declared at 261 for five, 178 runs behind the Australians' 439 for four on the first day, Jacques Kallis picked up three wickets with his medium pace to reduce the Australians to 107 for four, giving them a 256-run lead with six wickets in hand.

Earlier, the four-pronged medium pace Australian attack had bowled impressively against a strong Western Province batting line-up for most of the day.

Playing without Glenn McGrath and Shane Warne, the Australians had the Western Province batsmen struggling until the fifth-wicket partnership of Commins and Ackerman cut loose and scored 60 in 48 minutes to set up the declaration.

Jason Gillespie made a strong claim to share the new ball with McGrath in the three Tests, bowling well within himself to pick up one for 33. He claimed the wicket of Gary Kirsten, the Test opener, who was well caught by Steve Waugh at gully after he and Sven Koenig — who was in for three hours for 45 — had batted for nearly two hours in 78 runs.

Kallis (31) and Gibbs (28), the aspirants for the troubled No 3 spot in the South Africa Test team, looked solid, but failed to make big scores, each failing to catches behind the wicket.

Opting for more batting practice, the Australians opened their second innings with Blewett and Langer, who put on 28 before Langer edged an attempted hook off Schultz to Solomons, the wicketkeeper.

Three balls later Bevan was trapped leg-before by Kallis with his second ball of the innings to leave the Australians on 34 for two.

After a brief 37-run stand between Blewett (39 not out) and Healy, the Australians lost two wickets in three balls to Kallis.

□ Zimbabwe secured a 1-0 one-day series victory over India after a waterlogged pitch forced the scheduled second game, at the Harare Sports Club, to be abandoned yesterday. The washout gives Zimbabwe their second successive home victory in a one-day series after their 3-0 victory over England last month. Zimbabwe won the opening match on Saturday by eight wickets after rain reduced their target to 136 in 38 overs. It was only their second one-day win over India in 15 attempts.

Scoreboard, page 32

RUGBY UNION: LATE TRY BURST CONDEMNS IRELAND TO RECORD FIVE NATIONS' CHAMPIONSHIP DEFEAT

England save fireworks for finale

Ireland 6
England 46
FROM DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT
IN DUBLIN

CAN we cope with revelation and disappointment within the space of 80 minutes? The revelation came from an England side that, if it goes on like this, will destroy all five nations' championship records. The disappointment stemmed from the imprecision of so much play which a better side than Ireland would have punished, and with it the growing confidence of a young XV.

There is a balance to be struck between what we are entitled to expect from a team involved in the highest level of rugby in the northern hemisphere, and the development to full maturity of 15 players who came together only last month. For much of the first hour on Saturday, the inaccuracy of both teams at

FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP

Lansdowne Road would have made a New Zealander weep, yet by the end, so knowledgeable an individual as Sean Fitzpatrick, the All Blacks captain, could describe England as well down the road towards success.

Piece by piece the England jigsaw is coming together. Not only are they playing better for longer, but the key units are also coming to understand each other. Here it was the back row that found itself, perhaps impelled by the quality of those from the A side who would usurp them. Just as the combination of Corry, Diprose and Back had stood firm amid an untidy jumble of a game 24 hours earlier, so Rodber, with an authoritative display, Dallaglio and Hill showed how to distract and, more important, construct.

Whether so much destruction is necessary before England's final turn of the screw remains a moot point, but why can't a side that has scored 87 points in two matches and seems poised to shatter the championship record — established by England in 1992 — of 118 points? Never before have they posted so high a score in a championship match, imposing on the way Ireland's worst defeat in the competition.

Poor Ireland. The bubble of confidence so disproportionately swelled after a one-point win in Wales popped resoundingly in the final 15 minutes,



Staples, right, and Topping are unable to prevent Sleightholme scoring the first of his two tries for England against Ireland on Saturday

when Gomersall scored the first of five tries that swept away the men in green. They must have known that it would not be their afternoon when, with only 11 minutes played, they lost Eric Miller, around whom so many of their tactical plans were laid.

To lose one member of the team's spine is bad enough; to lose a second and have a third hamstring is even worse. Miller, concussed as England's forwards swarmed over him, will serve the mandatory three-week rest and must miss Leicester's Pilkington Cup tie with Newcastle on Saturday, as well as Ireland's final match with Scotland on March 1. When Elwood followed him off, Ireland were left with only O'Meara, the young Cork Constitution scrum half, as a backs replacement when Staples, one of their primary weapons of attack, pulled a hamstring.

If Miller was the intended ball-carrying target for his colleagues, Elwood was to be the executioner. His role passed to Humphreys, who is an entirely different kind of player, but whoever wore the No 10 shirt still had to endure a day in which Hogan, at

Ashton full of praise for rivals

THERE were no excuses from Brian Ashton after the meeting of Bath's two former coaches (David Hands writes), Ashton, now technical adviser to Ireland, said: "I'm delighted England didn't start the way they finished. In the last 15 minutes they slipped into a level of rugby with tremendous pace and finishing ability."

There were times in the first 50 when we were quite

creative and broke England's line more times than they are used to, but we either lost the ball or ran out of support."

Jack Rowell, the England coach with whom Ashton worked at Bath, acknowledged the disruption Ireland caused: "The game was stop-start, we must put that down to experience," he said. "But we do make mistakes under pressure and some of the things we talked about, keep-

ing the game simple, keeping control, we didn't do very well."

"Once we get possession in a row, however, it showed how many ball-handlers we have in the forwards as well as the backs. Austin Healey has been creating waves this season so we thought it would be good for him to get the feel of it and I haven't seen Tim Rodber play that well for a while."

defence and first Topping, then Hickie, was stymied down and dispossessed. The primary beneficiaries were Sleightholme and Hill, though the intervening work was admirable, and the cushion allowed Jack Rowell, the coach, to introduce Healey, for a first cap, and Guscott.

Both are blessed with speed and vision and the Irish cracks became chasms. Underwood, whose run from a missed clearance had created Sleightholme's first score, has always been liable to pop up in unexpected places. Now, glowing with confidence, he erupted into the line for one try and

then finished off in triumph a move that began 65 metres earlier and embraced ten passes.

The sixth try brought England's championship tally to ten, when last season they scored only three in four games. The average for the six matches this season is 5.5 tries, which puts the competition exactly on track for the record aggregate, set in 1911, of 55. Back to the future, you might say.

SCORERS: Ireland: Penalty goals Elwood (2), Elwood (1), Topping (1), Underwood (2), Guscott (1), Conroy (2); Ireland: Staples (2), Guscott (2), Guscott (2), Conroy (2). Penalty goals Grayson (4).

IRELAND: J E Staples (Harlequins, capt.), M G Guscott (Leicester), C Bell (Northampton), M J Field (Nottingham), J A Topping (Bath), E P Elwood (Lansdowne), N A Hogan (Terenure College), N J Pappageorge (Limerick), M J Conroy (Limerick), P S Wallace (Scarborough), D S Corke (Bristol), P S John (Scarborough), J W Davidge (London Welsh), W D McNamee (London Welsh), J R P. McNamee (London Welsh), P J McNamee (London Welsh), S D Shaw (Bristol), R A Hill (Scarborough), T A K Rodber (Nottingham), Army, Conroy replaced by A Healey (London Welsh), Topping replaced by J C Guscott (Bath), 77; Underwood replaced by C J Hause (New Zealand).

ENGLAND: T R G Stimpson (Newcastle), J M Sleightholme (Bath), W D C Carling (Harlequins), P R de Glanville (Bath), M J Hickie (London Welsh), D G Humphreys (London Welsh), Austin Healey (London Welsh), A C T Gomersall (Worcester), G C Rovens (Leicester), M P Rees (Bristol), J Leonard (Nottingham), L D N Dallaglio (Bath), D O Catt (London), S D Shaw (Bristol), R A Hill (Scarborough), T A K Rodber (Nottingham), Army, Conroy replaced by A Healey (London Welsh), 74; Carling replaced by J C Guscott (Bath), 77; Underwood replaced by C J Hause (New Zealand).

Rowell's throne wobbled by Prince Jeremy

Another record victory for England, and still an overwhelming sense of frustration. Jack Rowell, the coach, might justifiably talk of the ten tries scored by his side over the first half of the five nations' championship and ask: "What more do we have to do?" He has a point or 87.

England did to Ireland exactly what they had done to Scotland and, for that matter, exactly what the New Zealand Barbarians had done to them in those dim, distant, sterile days before Christmas. They won and they won handsomely, running in six tries that started from the routine to the spectacular. And yet?

And yet the lonely figure of Jeremy Guscott — last on the field for England, first off — was a lingering symbol of what might have been. Guscott was graciously given three minutes in which to tidy his shorts. He failed dismally. By the end of his allotted span his whites were still pristine, but one delightful shimmy past Bell and Underwood was away. Moments later, the same combination rounded off a sparkling, all-singing, all-dancing England move. The England wing, who had shown welcome signs of a return to pre-Lomu confidence in an earlier dash from his own tryline, would surely be the first signature on the "bring back Jerry" petition.

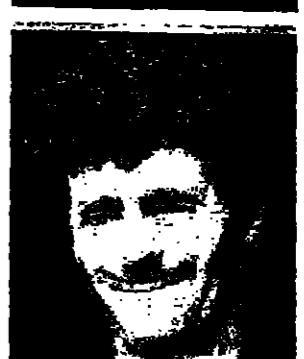
Three minutes, two tries made. "He is still the prince of centres," Rowell said, which begs several questions. Why is the prince of centres sitting on the bench for 77 minutes while his courtiers toil in front of him? What further damage might Bonnie Prince Jerry have inflicted over the course of the whole match? The prince might be asking roughly the same questions himself.

And yet, in this new professional whirligig of a game, it is not quite as easy as it seems. Guscott does not fit the pattern of the England play, not, at least, until the opposition have been ground into the sandy wastes of Lansdowne Road and Rowell has decided to press the button marked "interactivity" like some character in *Thunderbirds*. "England are go."

Interactivity is the rugby equivalent of total football, where backs become forwards, forwards handle and run like backs, and everyone is interchangeable. It is a favorite word of Rowell's, though it will not be found in many coaching manuals. "Interactivity proceeded apace..." Rowell intoned afterwards, and alongside him Phil de Glanville nodded appreciatively.

The last England try, a sweeping move from corner to corner, was an example of

ANDREW LONGMORE



At Lansdowne Road

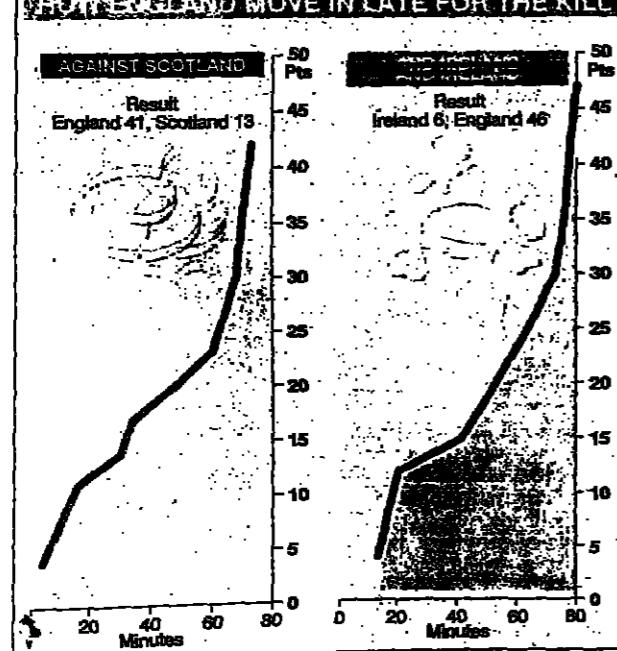
interactivity worthy of the All Blacks. But, like all wizard games, there is a catch. Ten minutes of interactivity has to be preceded by 70 minutes of inactivity, of unspectacular back-row grinding. Without the necessary tenderising, it seems that interactivity is impossible, and the further trouble is that Guscott does not suit interactivity. He is too quick, too mercurial. He exploits unexpected gaps, short-circuits the fuse, sends the forwards puffing gaily back to their set-pieces. Far from binding backs and forwards, he cuts them in half.

De Glanville, in contrast, is a bricks and mortar man who brings solidity and structure to the whole, and Rowell made a point of praising his captain and Carling for their part in stemming Ireland's early second-half onslaught. Without a proper stage, Rowell was suggesting, not even the prince of centres can perform. The weeping down is a prerequisite for the trampling. Or, to put it his way: "We knocked them down, picked up the pieces and scored the points."

And yet, while Guscott remains a fringe figure, his celebrity will rise and so will the penalty for failure. Victory justifies Guscott's omission, defeat will be pilloried. Even the Irish, who had jeered the entrance of most of the England team for the warm-up, deserved a cheer or two for Guscott. The talented artist down on his luck is a figure of universal charm, at least until as Le Tissier found out to his cost, the talent deserts him when the nation is watching. Then the artist is exposed as a charlatan and *revenge is swift*. The difference is that Guscott has proved himself at the highest levels. Le Tissier has not.

The prince himself is keeping his counsel. The prince of centres? "I have nothing to add to that," he said. And he shrugged and evaporated into the Dublin night.

ENGLAND MOVE IN LATE FOR THE KILL



Stout defiance silences Lansdowne Road roar

Rob Andrew found the Dublin crowd strangely subdued as the enormity of Ireland's task became quickly apparent

Everything about Dublin on Saturday seemed unreal. An hour before kick-off, the stadium was virtually empty. People were still filling in when the national anthems were being played. Expectations were left in the pubs. Just as Ireland never fired, neither did the crowd.

England were patient, passed the test of character and in the final quarter — again — hit the opposition with a tremendous scoring burst. Yes, France will be tougher on Saturday week, but this is a big, physical and now abundantly confident England team. They are deserved favourites for the championship and an injury-ravaged France, on this form,

did to Ireland what they had managed against Scotland two weeks earlier, but this was a far more convincing performance. The game against Scotland, as emphatic as the result was, left question marks: not so on Saturday. So comfortable did England appear that they might have been playing in slippers.

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are unlikely to disturb their equilibrium.

When Eric Miller was carried off early on, it was as if the crowd sensed the worst. It was quite obvious, too, that Eric Elwood was palpably unfit. Those injuries and the fact that Niall Hogan is now somewhere near an international-class scrum half meant that the spine of the Ireland team had collapsed.

Perhaps only France are good enough to play catch-up rugby. Ireland, frankly, are hopeless at it. Once behind,

they were quickly buried. Brian Ashton probably pushed Ireland to catch up more than they could chew. If they were trying to con England by their rash early attempts to run the ball, they were kidding only themselves. Where were the high wings to put the England wings under pressure?

England could not believe their luck. None of the Irish attributes of fire and passion were evident. All Ireland did was run into bigger, stronger England forwards.

who took the ball off them and caused damage. Tim Rodber, especially, came through a big test at No 8. His driving play and linking helped to give England the attacking platform from which they overran Ireland in as devastating a finish as I can recall.

Andy Gomersall, too, had a productive game, although some of his passes were again wayward. Austin Healey made an impact in his five minutes as an England scrum half, but you cannot judge a player on a few minutes when his side is so far ahead.

One of the keys to England's success is the measured calm of Paul Grayson, who is beginning to look composed at stand-off half. When under the cosh, England

land know that Grayson's boot can make them 70 yards and relieve their forwards of the hard work. I have always said that Grayson was underrated, and time and again at international level he keeps proving himself, not least with his place kicking.

I still have qualms about one or two positions, but this is a settled side that has quickly proved itself and should not be disturbed.

Ireland were on the first minute and their meeting with Scotland on Saturday week has the look of the wooden spoon decider. England will meet France on a record-scoring high, and I do not expect them to let themselves down at Twickenham.

TRY TRY AGAIN



GO THE DISTANCE

© 1997 Kellogg Company

Oliver Holt witnesses tears amid the triumph as Nottingham Forest are beaten

Chesterfield cling to impossible dream

In the dying minutes, with the score 1-0, some betrayed their fear by clasping their hands in prayer. Others implored the Chesterfield players to keep the ball in the Nottingham Forest half, terrified that a last attack might destroy their dreams. Injury time seemed interminable and the fans in the main stand — the only stand — begged David Elleray to blow his whistle.

Behind some of the journalists, who were sitting with the supporters because the Nationwide League second division club's tiny press box could not cope with the demand, the shrill voices of children corrupted their team's nickname in their anxiety, pleading with the "Sprites" to hang on. When their fathers had tired of trying to soothe them with knowing warnings about not yet hearing the fat lady sing, they abandoned themselves to the emotion of the occasion, too. "You're watching history, here," one of them told his son.

When the waiting was over and Chesterfield were in the quarter-finals of the FA Cup for the first

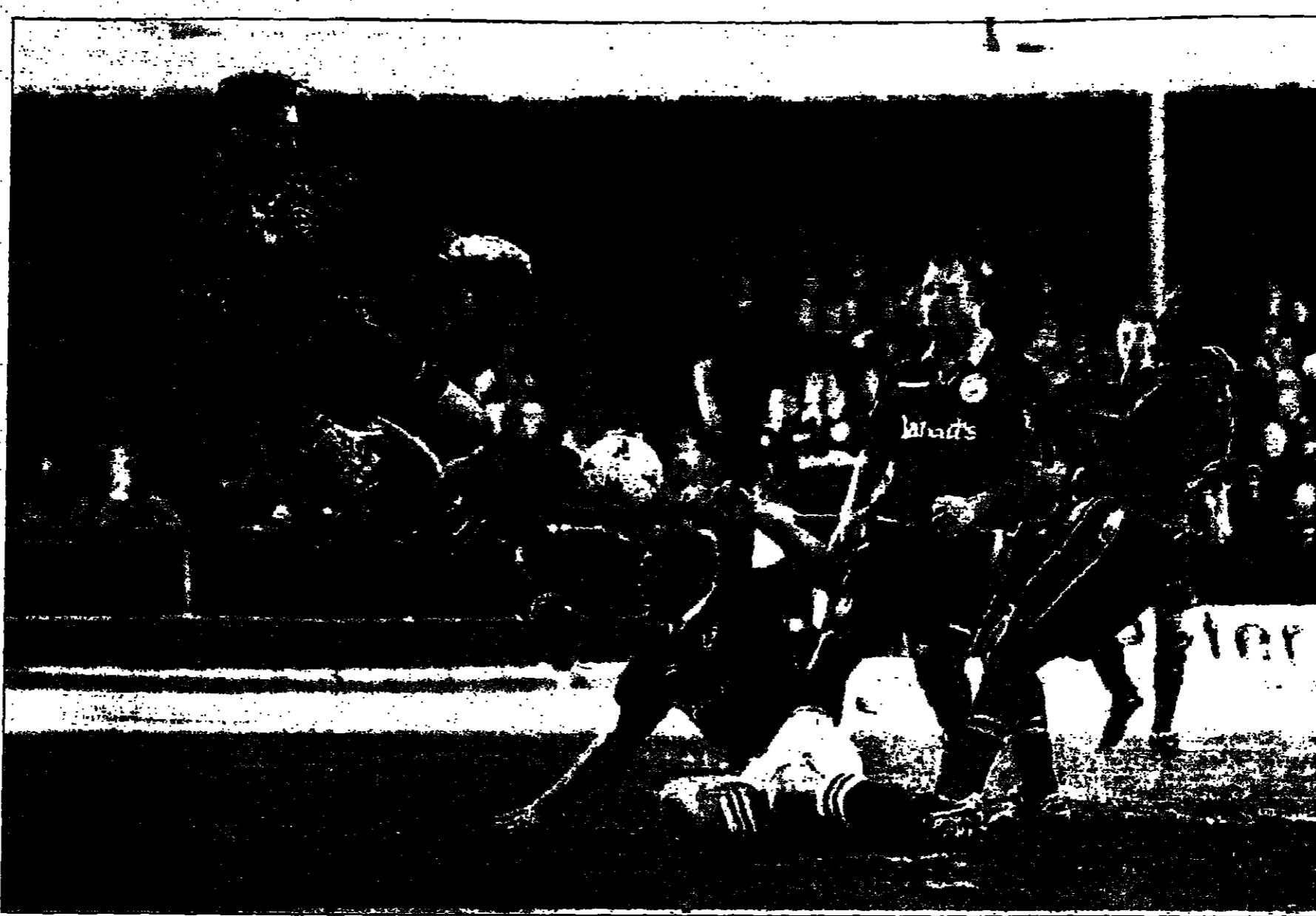


time in their long history, the supporters ran on to the pitch and bore the players from the muddy Saltergate field on their shoulders. Others knelt to kiss the turf. Grown men were weeping with joy. For a few seconds, it seemed excessive. It seemed strange.

Strange, because the creeping gentrification of football is stripping it of passion such as this. The loss of fervour and the dilution of devotion evident at so many FA Carling Premiership grounds has not extended to the lower reaches of the Nationwide League yet. Watching Chesterfield perform their giant-killing on Saturday was like visiting the land that football forgot.

For one thing, it is a town centre ground, surrounded by other institutions that once were pillars of the community. The Labour Club, serving lunches to supporters, is on one side of the ground, opposite the headquarters of the Derbyshire Miners' Association, dark and empty. Across the road from the stand, the Guides' Association building is next to the Baptist church. A short way away, the town's famous crooked spire rises over the rooftops.

Inside the stadium, terracing borders three sides of the pitch. The



Crossley, the Nottingham Forest goalkeeper who was later sent off, saves from Howard, the Chesterfield forward, at Saltergate. Photograph: Laurence Griffiths

roofs that shelter the fans are still low enough to kick a ball over, enabling supporters who could not get tickets to perch on rooftops and window ledges and watch from there. The players are still close enough that you can hear every word of their shouted instructions, hear the crunch of their tackles and the thud of their shots. You could also sense the sullen despair of the Forest team as the end neared.

The visitors hardly put up a fight. They did not fashion a chance. Saunders, Campbell and Roy did not test a defence manned by two second-choice players covering for injured team-mates. Chesterfield's margin of victory should have been bigger.

They played unimaginatively themselves in the first half, hoofing the ball out of defence in the

general direction of Morris, their centre forward, hoping to pounce on his flicks and nod-downs. Much of the play was untidy and uninteresting, even if Chesterfield did produce the outstanding chance of the opening 45 minutes, Crossley bringing off a fine reaction save from Howard's header after half an hour.

In the second half, though, Forest abandoned the struggle. Chesterfield, ninth in the second division but with enough games in hand to challenge for the play-offs, ran them ragged, and Stuart Pearce, the visitors' player-manager, imprisoned on the sidelines because of suspension, was powerless to rouse them.

The goal came in the 53rd minute. Howard ran on to Chris Beaumont's through-ball and took

it round Crossley. The Wales goalkeeper brought him down and was shown the red card. Tom Curtis sent Alan Fettis, the substitute goalkeeper, the wrong way with his penalty.

Two minutes later, Carr's thumping header from a corner rattled the underside of the Forest crossbar, and eight minutes from the end, after almost continuous Chesterfield pressure, Howard went round Fettis but stabbed the ball at the empty goal so weakly that it was hacked away before it could trickle into the net.

Afterwards, down in their changing-room, with paint flaking off the ceiling and hot-water pipes and their kit flung on a wooden table, they sprayed champagne and talked to the television cameras and talked to John Motson for *Match of the Day*.

"We are in the last eight of the biggest knockout competition in the world," John Duncan, their manager, said. "You can use any superlative you like to describe what this means to the town and to the club. It is amazing to think that we are only two matches away from Wembley."

Curtis, who was a student at Loughborough University a year ago, was the man most in demand in the throng. "If we win the FA Cup and get promotion," he said, "we'd have to call that a good season. I dreamt about the game last night, but we won 3-0 in the dream. Still, I thought we outplayed them in just about every department."

Farther down the corridor, the club chairman, J. Norton Lea, an avuncular figure with snowy white

hair, was talking about the future, about the plans to move the club to a new 12,000 all-seater ground on the site of the town's greyhound stadium.

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David Powell meets an emerging triathlete being schooled for success in 2000

Gilfillan gets on her bike for Sydney

She local paper labelled her a "wonder girl" and Worcester Sports Council made her its sports-woman of the year. She appears with Chris Boardman and Ben Ainslie in a pilot television video, *A League Of Their Own*, and has been on the front cover of *Triathlete* magazine. At 17, Ceris Gilfillan can barely take in what has happened to her in the past 18 months, let alone speculate about what the future might hold.

The 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, she said unhesitatingly, is a clear target and her school has taken the rare step of altering her timetable to help her to train with that goal in mind. Gilfillan is putting university on hold while dedicating herself to her great triathlon adventure, but says that it is too soon to say whether she might turn professional. "I cannot imagine it when it is just little me here thinking about all the world champions and top ten in the world," she said.

"Little me" is growing up fast. Two years ago, Gilfillan was a competitive runner and swimmer, but not a cyclist. Though hardly a beginner on a bike — "I didn't need stabilisers or anything like that," she laughed — neither had she shown an interest in racing. Then her father and brother held up the third piece of the triathlon jigsaw and Gilfillan made it fit.

"James, my brother, did a triathlon in October 1994, but I had never thought of doing one," Gilfillan said. "I did a cycling time-trial the following April because my dad used to do a lot of cycling and James had done some. Then, because I had done a time-trial, they said: 'Why don't you do a triathlon?' She could think of no excuse and, looking at her record now, it is just as well.

In 1995, within six months of her first triathlon, Gilfillan finished thirteenth in the

SPORT IN SCHOOLS

world junior B championships (under-16) in Cancún, Mexico. Last year, she won the British youth title and finished runner-up in the European championships. A useful but exceptional swimmer and runner, she has been a revelation on wheels, winning four national cycling titles in 1996.

In the words of Elaine Shaw, the British Triathlon Association (BTA) chief executive, Gilfillan has "a voracious appetite for competition". With triathlon set for the 2000 Olympics and 2002 Commonwealth Games, Gilfillan looks a solid bet, even this far ahead, to be in the front line for selection. "She certainly has the potential for the Olympics," Shaw said.

Gilfillan's school, appreciating the fact, is supporting her.

She is the only A-level student at The Chase High School, Malvern, taking two subjects rather than three. "We have adapted the timetable to suit her needs," Jane Powell, the head of PE, said. "But, if the person in question was not as dedicated as Ceris, I am not sure the school would be so helpful. We try to give kids the best opportunity to achieve their maximum, in whatever it may be."

While others plan for university, Gilfillan is intent on chasing ranking points to qualify for Sydney. Triathletes will need to be in the top three of their country and top 50 in the world. "You need three A levels to go to university but I



Gilfillan's competitive instincts have helped her on the road to the Olympics. Photograph: Julian Herbert

do not want to go straight away," Gilfillan said. "I want to race abroad and pick up as many points as I can."

The 1997 targets are the European and world championships. Not only must Gilfillan cope with double the distance but also, in the case of the world championships, "Seventeen-year-olds are allowed to go only if their country say they are good enough," she said. If she isn't, who is?

Gilfillan came to triathlon

having represented Worcestershire in swimming, cross country and hockey, playing in goal. At, the easy life of a goalkeeper compared with training for triathlon. She trains twice a day, 15 hours a week, including a 60-mile ride.

The more she puts in, the

more her parents take out of their bank account. Her mother estimates that £3,000 went on her daughter's triathlon needs last year. House repairs are on hold. "Once our mort

gage is paid, and the running costs, the rest goes on triathlon," she said.

The BTA, aware that it must

take triathlon into schools to fish for talent, has piloted a junior award scheme, which is likely to be launched in earnest this year, perhaps followed by a framework of schools competition. Interested parents should get their house repairs done now.

ICE HOCKEY

Devils warm to their mission

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CARDIFF Devils maintained their three-point lead in the Superleague with a hard-earned 4-3 away victory over Ayr Scottish Eagles in front of a capacity crowd of 2,733. A rush of goals midway through the first period saw the score go from 0-0 to 2-2 inside two minutes, Jamie Steer and Jiri Lale giving the home team a 2-0 lead with goals 20 seconds apart, only to see Ivan Matulik and the defenceman, Mike Ware, reply almost as quickly for the visitors.

The scoring rate slowed down after that, but Cardiff took over with goals by Doug McEwen and Doug McCar-

thy in the second period. Penalties to Marty Yewchuk and Frank Evans, of Cardiff, early in the third period gave Ayr a two-man advantage, enabling Ryan Kumm to score and bring the margin back to a single goal, but despite removing Sven Rampf, their goalkeeper, in favour of an extra forward in the final minute, they were unable to salvage a point.

Sheffield Steelers, in second place, trailed 1-0 to a first-period goal by Jonathan Weaver at home to Newcastle Cobras, but skated off 6-3 winners to keep up the sole challenge to Cardiff at the

head of the table. A goal by Ken Priestley levelled the score soon after the restart, but Mike Bodnaruk put Newcastle ahead again before Tim Cranston, with a goal either side of the second interval, gave Sheffield the lead for the first time. Tony Hand and David Longstaff extended the margin to 5-2, but Newcastle's gamble in taking off their goalies, Mikko Rautio, with more than a minute remaining paid off when Markku Kyllonen scored his team's third. However, Frank Kovacs put the puck into the empty net nine seconds later.

The proposals would also have biased the championships towards sculling rather

ROWING

Britain toast success in Sydney

BY MIKE ROSEWELL, ROWING CORRESPONDENT

THE British delegation had every reason to celebrate this weekend after achieving total success at the Fisa Congress in Sydney, when it persuaded the Fisa council to drop its proposals to cut the number of events in the world championships from 24 to 19.

British athletes and administrators were concerned when, last August, the council of the world's governing body announced proposals to cut back the number of events, on the grounds of cost and media friendliness.

The proposals would also have biased the championships towards sculling rather

than rowing, the latter, of course, being the discipline which is more successfully undertaken by Britain internationally.

After six months of international canvassing the British delegation of David Tanner, the international manager, Di Ellis, the Amateur Rowing Association (ARA) chairman, and Martin Brandon-Bravo, the leader and ARA President, achieved all their aims.

On a British motion, Congress agreed to maintain a 24-event programme for the world championships. The men's coxed four and coxed pair will remain, as will the current three, for lightweights.

BOWLS

Biggs's six too late to save title-holders

BY DAVID REYES JONES

A BRILLIANT count of six, conjured up by Mel Biggs, the England international, was not enough to save Wiltshire, the holders of the Liberty Trophy, from a 124-119 defeat by Nottinghamshire in the national inter-county semi-final at Wellington on Saturday.

Biggs was level, 15-15, with Bob Dickens after 19 ends, but scored a treble on the twentieth, and took out an enemy bowl to score six on the 21st, bringing Wiltshire within three shots of Nottinghamshire with only two ends left to play.

Nottinghamshire skips, Jamie Mills and Simon Barker, both scored singles, however, and the crisis was averted. Biggs was Wiltshire's only winning skip, but Mills, Barker, Duncan Robinson, Brett Morley and Phil Talbot returned winning cards for Nottinghamshire.

Nottinghamshire, who had never previously gone beyond the semi-final stage, will now face the winners of the semi-final between Kent and Cumbria on Saturday.

Llanelli, the 1995 champions, will face the crown green bowlers of North Wales in the final of the Welsh inter-club final next Saturday, after beating the holders, Cardiff, 123-94, in the semi-final at Ogwr.

Firth, who played at Prestyn, won the Northern League this winter for the first time. With few flat greens north of Llandrindod Wells, they attract crown green players, many of whom cross the English border to play the green game in winter.

SAILING: CREWS PROVIDE BOOST FOR ORGANISERS WITH BLANKET FINISH

Fanfare for the common man

BY EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT

MANY of the top racing sailors in Great Britain like to criticise the BT Global Challenge. To them, it is little more than a "round-the-world soap opera" for inexperienced amateurs, which harms the image of racing sailing, while at the same time commands unjustifiably large amounts of sponsorship and coverage by the media.

The 1996-97 race has already demonstrated, however, that, as a sporting event, it has every right to its prominent position. With one-design yachts and crew selection carefully geared to ensuring that no boat has an unfair advantage, the Challenge has turned out to be every bit as close-fought and competitive as its professional equivalents.

What does it matter that the overall skill level is lower than, say, in a Whitbread Round the World Race, so

long as everyone starts on the same footing, which is clearly the case. The race offers a refreshingly unprofessionalised sporting spectacle, featuring ordinary people.

This weekend the crews and skippers have done the talking for Chay Blyth, the race founder and director, who is tireless in its defence. After sailing 1,250 miles across the Tasman Sea from Wellington, the 14-strong fleet arrived in Sydney, with just six hours separating first from last.

After what, for many of the crews, had been a week-long match race with their closest rivals on the water, the 67-foot steel cutters carved their way into Sydney Harbour yesterday with, in some cases, only minutes separating them. It

was a thrilling exhibition of one-design racing. So hectic were the arrivals that the customs were overwhelmed and several crews had to stand off while those ahead were processed.

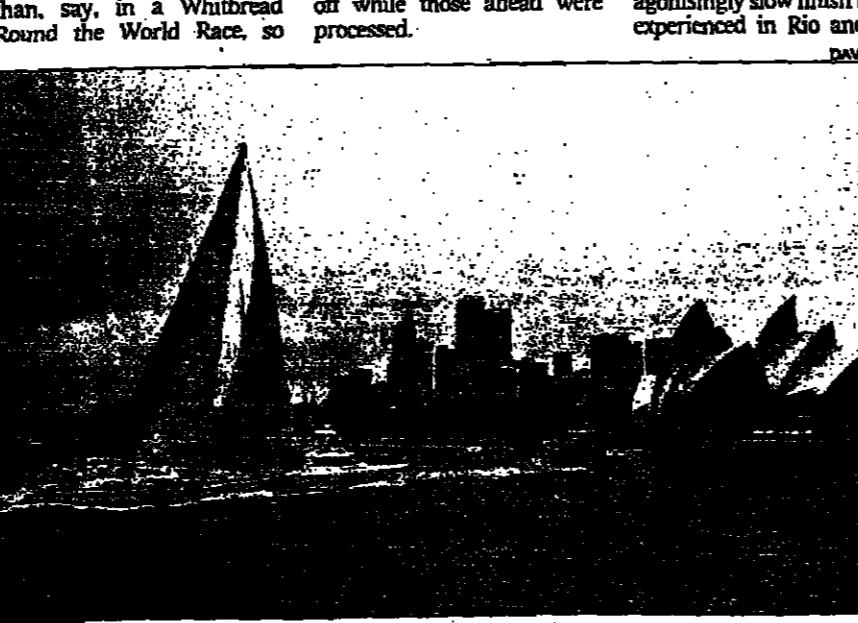
longing, he nevertheless saw his cherished lead obliterated by Hindley in the final stretch. A message from Group 4 while still at sea underlined the tension on board.

"With Concert and Toshiba Wave Warrior now on the horizon, the pressure has increased beyond belief," the crew reported. "Over the past few hours a concertina effect has been seen across the whole fleet. Spanning some 91 miles this morning, we are now spread across 68 miles with just two or three miles separating the first 11 yachts. Now it is just a matter of 'rounding-up', as skipper Mike Golding would say."

Among the closest finishers were *Pause To Remember*, *Concert 3Com*, who were fifth, sixth and seventh, respectively, but spread over only 1½ minutes. *Heath Insured II*, which held the early lead, finished in twelfth, with the disabled crew on *Time & Tide* last, after a leg where sail changes were frequent.

With three legs completed and a two-week rest before the restart for the voyage to Cape Town, Golding has slightly improved his hold on the event and now has an overall lead of around 18 hours over *Toshiba* and *Save The Children*, who are just 43 minutes apart. With 32 hours to *Motorola*, in fourth, overall honours still look like coming from the first three.

RESULTS: 1. *Save The Children* 7days 07hr 22min 50sec (armist 07hr 22min 50sec); 2. *Global 4* 12hr 50min 44s; 3. *Courseau International* 7hr 05min 45s; 4. *Global Teamwork* 7hr 10min 00s; 5. *Pause To Remember* 7hr 11hr 17min 41s; 6. *Concert 3Com* 7hr 11hr 32min 47s; 7. *Time & Tide* 7hr 11hr 39min 00s; 8. *Motorola* 7hr 12hr 05min 44s; 9. *Electro 2* 7hr 13hr 39min 34s; 10. *Toshiba Wave Warrior* 7hr 13hr 39min 30s; 11. *Motorola* 7hr 11hr 41min 44s; 12. *Heath Insured II* 7hr 12hr 01min 01s; 13. *Concert 3Com* 7hr 12hr 05min 11s; 14. *Time & Tide* 7hr 13hr 42min



Save The Children sails towards the Sydney Opera House at the end of the stage

Diary, page 18

Cherry-pickers avoid golf course hazards

Jack Nicklaus, reputed to be the best golfer of all time, took time years to earn \$1 million in prize-money. By contrast, Tiger Woods, the latest phenomenon to hit the United States Tour, reached that target in nine weeks. Even allowing for inflation, this is no mean feat.

In 1975, when the European PGA Tour emerged in its present form, prize-money for its 17 tournaments totalled \$600,000. By last year that figure had grown to \$30 million for a total of 37 events played in locations ranging from the Far East to Jersey. Around 200,000 spectators are expected to attend the British Open at Royal Troon this year.

The achievement of the Europeans in breaking the United States dominance in the Ryder Cup fuelled the amateur game in Britain and led, briefly, to demand outstripping the number of courses available. As a result, new courses began popping up all over the country. Then came the recession and a large number of new clubs were either sold or went into receivership.

"Our strategy has been to buy prestigious courses at the right price," he said. "The company is aiming to hold a portfolio of 20 top courses by the end of the decade.

The failure of many clubs in recent years has provided PGA Tour Courses and its nearest rival, Clubhubs, with the opportunity to pick them up at knockdown prices.

Clubhubs operates at what Guy Buckley, a director, describes as the "family end" of the market. It is the group's intention to offer golf as part of an overall leisure package, aimed at the family as a whole rather than just the average hacker. The company operates four facilities in this country, including the impressive Duke's Dene course in Surrey, as well as two more in Germany and one in Belgium. Buckley, formerly with IMG, said: "Our objective is to establish up to 15 courses in this country over the medium term."

"We see ourselves a bit like a hotel, but instead of burns on beds we are attempting to get burns on tees. Once we have achieved that we can then improve our profitability by offering those golfers the use of other extensive facilities and packages."

By encouraging the family concept it is hoped the Nick Faldo of tomorrow will emerge. Come September and the Ryder Cup, the need for fresh talent may become all too apparent.

MICHAEL CLARK

DATA-ENTRY

Racecourse closures no answer to problems of finance

When Lord Wakeham, the chairman of the British Horseracing Board, launched the BHB discussion paper *Racing Industry Review: Options for Change* on February 6, he was at pains to emphasise that the paper was the work of the BHB executives and not the BHB Board. It is to be hoped that when the Board meets to put its seal on the document on March 6 it kicks into touch some of the more unrealistic options that have been raised.

There are ideas in the paper which could command racecourse respect, such as a review of prize-money funding to increase racecourse and sponsorship input. Centralised initiatives through the BHB marketing department, an enhancement of the position of the Tote in the betting market and an examination of alternatives to the levy.

However, these positive moves are overshadowed by a number of ideas which would seriously damage the well-being of the increasingly thriving racecourses. As managing director of the Racecourse Association (RCA), it is hardly surprising that I view with some hostility the proposals to contemplate racecourse closures, enforce fixture movements and reduce the compensation payments to courses which race on unprofitable days for the benefit of off-course betting.

Two years ago, the BHB created a more customer-friendly fixture list, prompted by the RCA, accompanied by an exhortation that "strong racecourses make for a strong racing industry". This clarion call is beginning to have a rather hollow sound to it. The discussion paper has an anti-enterprise feel to it, casting covetous eyes at the wealth

STANLEY JACKSON

Racing Commentary

Labour reveals plans to privatise the Tote

By RICHARD EVANS

RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE UNWELCOME PROSPECT of racing losing at least £13 million in revenue next year — equivalent to a quarter of the sport's proceeds from betting — emerged yesterday after the Labour party confirmed it wants to privatise the Tote.

Gordon Brown and Jack Straw, the shadow Chancellor and Home Secretary, have held discussions about selling off the pool betting organisation and using estimated proceeds of between £400 million and £500 million to help fund the party's spending plans. "They think that given the current state of public spending there is potential to realise money for education and health," an adviser to Brown said yesterday.

The impact on racing's finances from privatisation could be severe. In 1995-96 the Tote's contribution to racing from betting levies, payments to racecourses and sponsorship totalled £8.3 million. The loss of such revenue would be bad enough, but it could coincide with a change in the system for collecting betting levy, due to come into force in April 1998, which will see a cut of between £5 million and £7 million a year in the amount racing receives from betting.

Such a double blow would plunge racing into chaos. Some of the 59 racecourses

would face closure and low levels of prize-money would be squeezed still further.

Ironically, the Government reviewed the future of the Tote last year and examined the possibility of transferring it to racing, but Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, concluded in July that "complex issues" made such a step impractical. The main stumbling block, and one Labour will have to overcome if it decides to go ahead with privatisation, involves European competition policy.

The Tote enjoys an exclusive licence to operate pool betting but the Home Office concluded "it might not be possible to maintain the exclusive licence on transfer to a private body [and] the fixed odds business might have to be removed from the Tote."

Without an exclusive licence, the value of the Tote, with its 200 betting shops, would plummet to around £35 million. However, if the pool betting "monopoly" could be

maintained when the Tote was privatised, it could raise up to £500 million. Significantly, the Brown aide added: "Thought has been given to that and we don't think they are insurmountable odds."

When Howard set up his review of the Tote he said it would consider all options — including public flotation, contracting out and sale by competitive tender — but insisted they should be consistent with two principles. "The Government should maintain the extent to which racing currently benefits from the Tote and the viability of pool betting in the public interest."

The key question is whether a privatised Tote would be obliged to continue to make such a large financial contribution to racing. An "endowment fund" for racing might have to be removed from the Tote, but if new owners were obliged to provide millions of pounds each year it would reduce substantially the Tote's value — and the amount privatisation

would raise for the Treasury.

The confirmation of Labour's plans, which have been under discussion for six months, came as a surprise to racing yesterday — not least to Lord Wyke of Westford, who steps down as the Tote chairman at the end of April. "It's total nonsense. I don't believe for one moment they would dream of doing such a thing. It is the product of feverish imagination. There are so many complications, not least the question of the exclusive licence," he said.

Lord Wakeham, chairman of the British Horseracing Board, was more pragmatic. "There are two main snags. The Treasury would want to obtain full value so that racing, which would be concerned as to what happened to the Tote, would have to pay the full amount if it wanted to buy it. Secondly, Labour would have to demonstrate how they could get past the European competition rules."

If Labour's plans come to fruition, the successor to Lord Wyke as chairman of the Tote — likely to be announced next month — would have a short period of office. The Government's attitude to privatising the Tote is likely to be made clear at the Tote's annual lunch on March 5 when the Prime Minister is the probable guest speaker.



Master Oats was pulled up at Punchestown yesterday in his first race for a year

Master Oats faces retirement

MASTER OATS has been

taken out of the Gold Cup and Grand National betting and may be retired after being pulled up on his first race for a year at Punchestown yesterday (our Irish racing correspondent writes).

Norman Williamson pulled up Master Oats before the third last in the Ericsson GSM Grand National Trial Chase, won by the former Cheltenham Festival winner, Antonin. The Sue Bramall

trained gelding is 16-1 with William Hill for Aintree.

"His heart wasn't there. It wasn't a lack of fitness," Kim Bailey, the trainer of Master Oats, said. "Norman said on that ground he should have come home on the bridle. We will take him home and see but there is a possibility he will be retired. We certainly won't flog him."

Only three of the nine runners finished on the heavy going and Antonin won by a distance after a rugged front-running performance under Conor O'Dwyer. "He enjoyed being in front and looked like the horse of old. The National has always been his target," Bramall said.

Commanche Court, trained by Ted Walsh, the Irish television commentator, followed up his debut success in the grade three Juvenile Hurdle. He is 8-1 with William Hill for the Elite Racing Club Triumph Hurdle.

NATIONAL HUNT LEADERS

TRAINERS

M. P. McCoy 125 2d 20 1st 1st 1st

M. H. Moore 98 47 26 1 1st 33.75

M. Bailey 57 42 26 1 1st 17.75

P. Nichols 53 45 31 10 1st 6.44

P. Nichols 52 38 26 4 1st 31.70

G. Richards 48 32 10 5 1st 9.81

M. Harwood 47 43 26 1 1st 32.22

N. I. Davies 34 31 19 2 1st 39.93

JOCKEYS

A. P. McCoy 126 51 2 1st 5.18

A. Doherty 78 57 2 1st 20.05

A. Moore 73 71 2 1st 10.67

R. Dromody 62 68 4 1st 9.25

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P. Nichols 59 39 21 9 1st 13.95

A. Doherty 55 39 21 9 1st 13.95

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Diary, page 18

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If Labour's plans come to fruition, the successor to Lord Wyke as chairman of the Tote — likely to

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THE TIMES MONDAY FEBRUARY 17 1997

SPORT 35

Old barriers come crashing down as nation's netballers strive to beat best in the world

Men of Middlesex cross great divide in battle of the sexes

Overheard in a home somewhere in England. "Where's my netball kit? I need it. Quickly (screams). I'm late."

"Be quiet, daughter darling, I'm trying to concentrate. Daddy needs his kit. Oh, what have I done with it?"

Whatever the hidden dramas may be for the average chap going off for his weekend game of netball, at county level you have to be prepared. Yesterday, every Middlesex player arrived 45 minutes before the match, in good time for the team-talk and warm-up, raring to go.

Colin Gordon, as is usual before a big game, watched his motivational video of the world's best teams the night before. Pete Gill made sure he was in bed early. He always is before netball the next day. Yes, men really do play netball and I challenge you to find a member of the Birmingham women's squad who played Middlesex in Birmingham yesterday who would not agree they play it pretty well.

Carol, selling tickets at the door, was, at first, "not impressed with their shape or look". She only had to watch them warm up to change her mind. "Now I have seen them on court, it's a different story," she said. "They are good you know." Carol has not been playing for 28 years without developing an eye.

She had never watched a men's team before. "I didn't think I would ever see the day," she confessed. So mesmerised was she that it would have been possible, I think, to sneak in without paying once the match had started.

Middlesex are effectively the England men's team and, such as they are, have been their improvement; that they are used regularly as training opposition for the England women's squad. With status like that, the jibes are becoming increasingly outdated and the number of men's teams in England is now into double figures.

David Powell sees England's women enjoy benefit of unexpected help

"People laugh and ask us if it is necessary to wear skirts," said Ian Root, the Middlesex vice-captain, said. "They usually say, and we have been asked this by women's teams: 'Are we all gay?' There is still a stigma and image problem to be overcome, but awareness has increased through the Nineties and now that there is a general acceptance that it is not such a girls'-poor sport. More men are willing to play it."

The England women's camp is delighted. "The girls have an advantage of skill and tactics because they have been playing the game longer through school.

'People laugh and ask us if it is necessary to wear skirts... there is still a stigma'

but we tend to score on the physical side, on height and speed," Michael Blott, the men's representative on the All England Netball Association (AENA), said. A men's representative on AENA, note. These boys are serious.

Middlesex won 25-22. "They were more powerful and stronger than us and could jump higher," Christine Weaver, an England squad member, said. But not brutal. "They are a clean team," she added. "Not as dirty as some of the female teams we play." And the very idea of men playing netball? "It is good for the sport, it will improve its profile."

Weaver, playing goal defence, was giving away four inches to Root. Even when marking him tightly, his jumping would earn him possession.

England women aspire to beat

Australia and New Zealand and Broomhead recognises the benefit of playing against men. "Tactically, they are nowhere near Australia and New Zealand, but they can produce the type of movement that challenges us to find the skills that we know we are going to need against those countries," Liz Broomhead, the England women's coach, said. "They have worked hard on making sure their basic skills are there."

Root noted that when Jamaica and South Africa played England, they had a 6ft 4in shooter, adding that it was as much about reach as height. "That is the role we provide, giving them the type of practice they are looking for," Root said. "The game we play is the overhead, aerial game. You just lift the ball over the defender into the hands of the attacker."

The rule change introduced 12 months ago means that an umpire blows for contact only if it is interfering with the game, so players have to be tougher. They are going to have to learn to stand their ground when they have got 1st running at them. Some of the teams they play on the world scene have enormous girls fit, powerful, chunky."

Lorraine Law, a 6ft 3in England shooter, said: "In England, there are no female goalkeepers who can cover my shots. It is harder to get the ball past the men than someone I can dominate. It is brilliant practise for international netball. They play a more unorthodox netball, but it gives us a chance to test our reflexes and adaptability."

Why do men play netball? "They are attracted by its speed and skill," according to Blott. Colin Hill, a van driver with Ravelin Hill, defected from basketball. "You get the banter in the pub," Hill said. "They call you tart and poof, but once they chat about it they envy you." Just wait until he tells them about all the hugging and kissing that the men and women exchanged at the end.

England women aspire to beat



Weaver can only watch as Gill takes a shot for the men in Birmingham yesterday

HOCKEY

Conway's skill helps to lift Teddington to top

BY SYDNEY FRISKIN

NICK CONWAY inspired Teddington to a 5-1 victory against Guildford and to leadership of the premier division of the National League with two goals in the first 12 minutes of a match at Chiswick yesterday.

Conway seized his chances from scrambles deep inside the circle and assisted McGuire to score the next two goals, the second from a penalty stroke in the 49th minute.

Hall reduced the lead with a shot high into an empty net seven minutes later, but Billson was soon on target for Teddington's fifth goal.

As one-sided as the result may seem, Guildford were well in this game of strong running and hard tackling but did not have the rob of the green. Jennings hit a post from the second of two short corners in the first half and Hall twice missed the mark by inches.

In the match that followed at the same venue, Cannock, without the

injured Crucible, lost 2-1 to Hounslow, who established a 2-0 lead with a goal in each half by Williamson from a penalty stroke and Nurse from a short corner.

Edwards hit a post from a penalty stroke for Cannock in the 56th minute, but Sharpe scored from open play a minute before the end.

Reading were back in the hunt with a 4-0 away win against Barford Tigers, with goals by Wyatt and Oscroft from penalty corners, Pearson and Ashdown from open play.

Havant achieved their first win in 18 matches by defeating East Grinstead 4-3 with goals by Conville Jackson and Gerrissen from short corners. Wilkinson added the other. Gibson obtained all East Grinstead's goals. His first from a short corner and a third from a penalty stroke. A goal by Davis three minutes before the end rescued Southgate, who held Canterbury to a 4-4 draw.

As one-sided as the result may seem, Guildford were well in this game of strong running and hard tackling but did not have the rob of the green. Jennings hit a post from the second of two short corners in the first half and Hall twice missed the mark by inches.

In the match that followed at the same venue, Cannock, without the

BASKETBALL: CHAMPIONS RECORD LOWEST SCORE OF SEASON

Towers crack under title strain

BY NICHOLAS HARLING

THE lowest Budweiser League score of the season, recorded embarrassingly by the champions, London Towers, on Saturday has renewed the hopes of the other title contenders. The Towers collapsed 82-46 Manchester Giants in the Nymex Arena, their worst domestic defeat, to revive the spirits of Sheffield Sharks and Chester Jets.

Only a week ago Mike Burton,

the Jets coach, was bemoaning his club's fading chances after their one-point defeat at Wembly.

But along with Jim Brandon, of Sheffield, who, like Chester, were winners on Saturday, Burton need not give up.

Kevin Cadle, the Towers coach, was not shocked by the manner of his side's defeat to discuss it. His players had succeeded with only 25 per cent of their attempts from the field.

"That didn't help" Rick Taylor, the general manager, said. "I have never seen anything like it. We were outplayed, outrebounded,

outrevered. It's the longest bus ride home I have ever known."

From the first few minutes, when the Giants surged ahead 15-5, the outcome was a formality. A spectacular three-pointer from Kevin St. Kitts took Joe Whelton's squad 20 points clear at 43-23, after which it was the turn of Colin Irish to make the evening a wretched one for Cadle, his former coach.

Results and table 32

Irish dominated the final quarter, when, with 14 points that included four three-pointers, he took his tally to 18, one more than Mark Robinson. Danny Lewis, with a paltry 11 points, was Towers' leading scorer. Far more predictable was the Giants' 79-63 win last night at Crystal Palace, where it was the turn of Michael Brown to include four three-pointers among his 28 points. Palace had lost 80-89 at Worthing Bears the night before.

Sticking to their principles has proved a costly exercise for Leicester Riders, who, after suspending Leon McGee for a breach of club discipline, followed up their departure from the 7-Up Trophy by losing 92-88 at Hertford and Watford Royals, the Budweiser League's bottom club. Sam Stiller led Hertford's scorers for the first time with 22 points, including the last two decisive free throws.

SNOOKER

Higgins makes nervous opening to title defence

BY PHIL YATES

JOHN HIGGINS, the defending champion, may or may not be superstitious but his thirteenth successive match in the International Open was nearly an unlucky one yesterday for the world No 2.

Higgins badly wants to put on a show for Aberdeen's snooker followers, who have responded to the first-ever staging of a ranking tournament in Scotland by turning out in their droves.

Nearly one thousand were in attendance at the Exhibition and Conference Centre to see the 21-year-old, a member of his country's World Cup winning trio, take on promising compatriot Graeme Dott.

With no focal players participating in the £30,000 event allegiance for Higgins, from Wishaw, and Dott, a resident of the Lanarkshire village of Larkhall, was divided.

Even with Higgins facing an unexpected defeat in a deciding

ninth frame, their loyalty remained split. After 215 minutes of cut and thrust during the afternoon, it was the supporters of Higgins who were celebrating as their man recovered from 23-10 down with a clearance of 61 to

secure a 54-5 victory.

"I'm delighted to still be involved in the tournament but I cannot believe how badly I am playing," lamented the 21-year-old title-holder, unbeaten in the competition that has moved from Bournemouth to Swindon and now to the Granite City in the last three years. "It's heartbreaking." Higgins added, "I missed so many easy balls and, really, Graeme deserved to win."

Higgins hasn't won a championship since his success over Rod Lawler in the final last year, and there was nothing in this performance to scare Dennis Taylor, his opponent in the second round tonight.

POINT-TO-POINT

Fantus keeps Festival on agenda

BY CARL EVANS

FANTUS was beaten at the United Services meeting on Saturday, but his trainer remains upbeat about the horse's future. An ambitious plan to land a Cheltenham Festival and Aintree double with the ten-year-old seemed doomed as he pulled up 'very leg weary' in second behind stablemate Brackenfield.

Off the course for nearly two years, Fantus has been a challenge to trainer Richard Barber, who briefly thought his horse had broken down. "He did the same on his first run two seasons ago," Barber said yesterday. "Basically he is a big horse and he was shattered. Today he is 100 per cent. I will talk to his owner today, but I expect the plan is as before."

Tim Mitchell put the Fantus disappointment behind him and rode a double at the meeting. With seven wins he was two ahead of reigning national champion Jamie Jukes on Saturday night after the Welshman had completed a treble at the Vale of Clefton. Reg Wilkins saddled Double Thriller to win a division of the restricted at the South Pool Harriers meeting. Ron Edwards Open 1: The Bounder J Tizzard, 4-5; 2: Tizzard, 2; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 1: A Farman, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 2: A Farman, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 3: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 4: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 5: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 6: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 7: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 8: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 9: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 10: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 11: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 12: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 13: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 14: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 15: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 16: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 17: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 18: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 19: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 20: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 21: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 22: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 23: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 24: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 25: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 26: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 27: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 28: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 29: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 30: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 31: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 32: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 33: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 34: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 35: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 36: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 37: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 38: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 39: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 40: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 41: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 42: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 43: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 44: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 45: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 46: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 47: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 48: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1. Final: 1: Edwards, 2; 2: Tizzard, 1. Fun 49: Edwards, 6-8; 2: Tizzard, 1; 3: Edwards, 1.

Ronald Gribble samples the thrills and spills of a skiing course in the French Alps for late starters

Hands, skis and booms-a-daisy

PHOTOGRAPHS: RONALD GRIBBLE

The first sight that caught my eye as our coach climbed the road towards the St Gervais ski region in the French Alps was a sleek white Citroen ambulance speeding down the mountain, its blue light flashing.

Another bad omen, I thought. On the previous two weekends during lessons on my local dry ski slope, two people had been injured: one twisted a knee and the other fractured a wrist.

I had booked a week's beginner's ski course for grown-ups, where I could take my tumbles in mature company, away from the laughing eyes of twenty-somethings half my age, and in the hope of achieving a longstanding ambition: to ski the slopes and be able to bluff my way through those after-dinner skiing holiday conversations.

Our hotel, *La Belle Etoile*, in Le Bettex, was in a magnificent setting at the foot of Mont Blanc, with a nursery slope and ski lift outside the front door. We were fitted with our boots and skis in the hotel's ski workshop that Saturday evening and met at the door by our French instructors first thing next morning.

We were a motley party of 20 men and women aged from about 30 to a sprightly 76 and divided into three groups: beginners, intermediates and advanced intermediates.

They say that everyone falls in love with their ski instructor. Marielle was a pretty, bronzed brunette with an infectious smile and dressed in a bright red skisuit. "Rien, benz zee knees," she would purr, wagging a finger when I did not follow her instructions and ended up in a pile of snow.

She taught us to keep our balance by leaning forward in our ski boots, great hulks of plastic padded with foam, with fierce snap fasteners, that felt, at first, like lead weights.

The skiing position is very simple. Your natural instinct, however, is to stand in a stiff, semi-sitting position, bottom stuck out, when, in fact, you should adopt a relaxed standing position, arms forward, with the knees slightly bent.

Marielle had a good sense of humour. She needed it. No sooner had she picked one of us up, than another fell down. "Rien! Are you listening to me?" she would scold, flashing her big brown eyes. "Stop looking at your skis. Look where you are going. You are a danjore on the slopes."

I took extra advice from the 76-year-old in our party, a veteran skier who had made his first pair of skis out of wood as a boy in the Thirties: "Fix a point with your eyes and almost throw yourself at it," he said. "If you are leaning forward, you can't fall over. If you lean back, your skis will slide from under you."

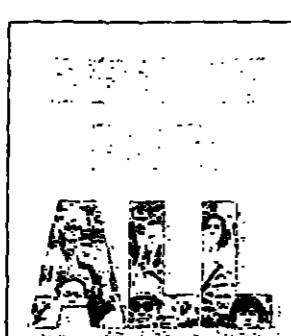
The writer with instructor Marielle who did her best to teach him to ski

He was right, of course, but if my speed became too fast and I lost my nerve, my instinct was to sit down. Marielle persevered. She taught us how to do snow ploughs by stretching the legs wide apart and holding the skis in a triangular position with the tips almost touching at the front to slow our speed.

On the Monday we mastered the button lift, a long pole with a plate-sized seat that you put between your legs to allow yourself to be dragged up slopes with your skis sliding along in the snow.

Marielle took us to an almost deserted valley where we learned to do slow parallel turns — "S" shaped loops in the snow. She showed us how to turn by putting our weight on our downhill ski and sliding our other ski in the direction we wanted to go, transferring our weight to make the turn.

Over our lunchtime soup



came the news that Grace, one of the advanced intermediates, had broken a leg in the mountains and was being brought down by sledge. The ambulance stopped at the hotel on the way to hospital to collect her insurance details.

We all remembered to take out insurance cards the next time we went out on the slopes.

When a knee started to hurt later that afternoon I decided to call it a day and return to the hotel for a hot bath — an instant cure, I discovered, for twisted limbs, tired muscles, aches and bruises.

Even after ski school, when we practised alone, Marielle kept an eye on us from afar, pointing out any bad habits. "Deneez," she shouted one afternoon to Dennis, a member of our party: "You've got your boots on the wrong feet!"

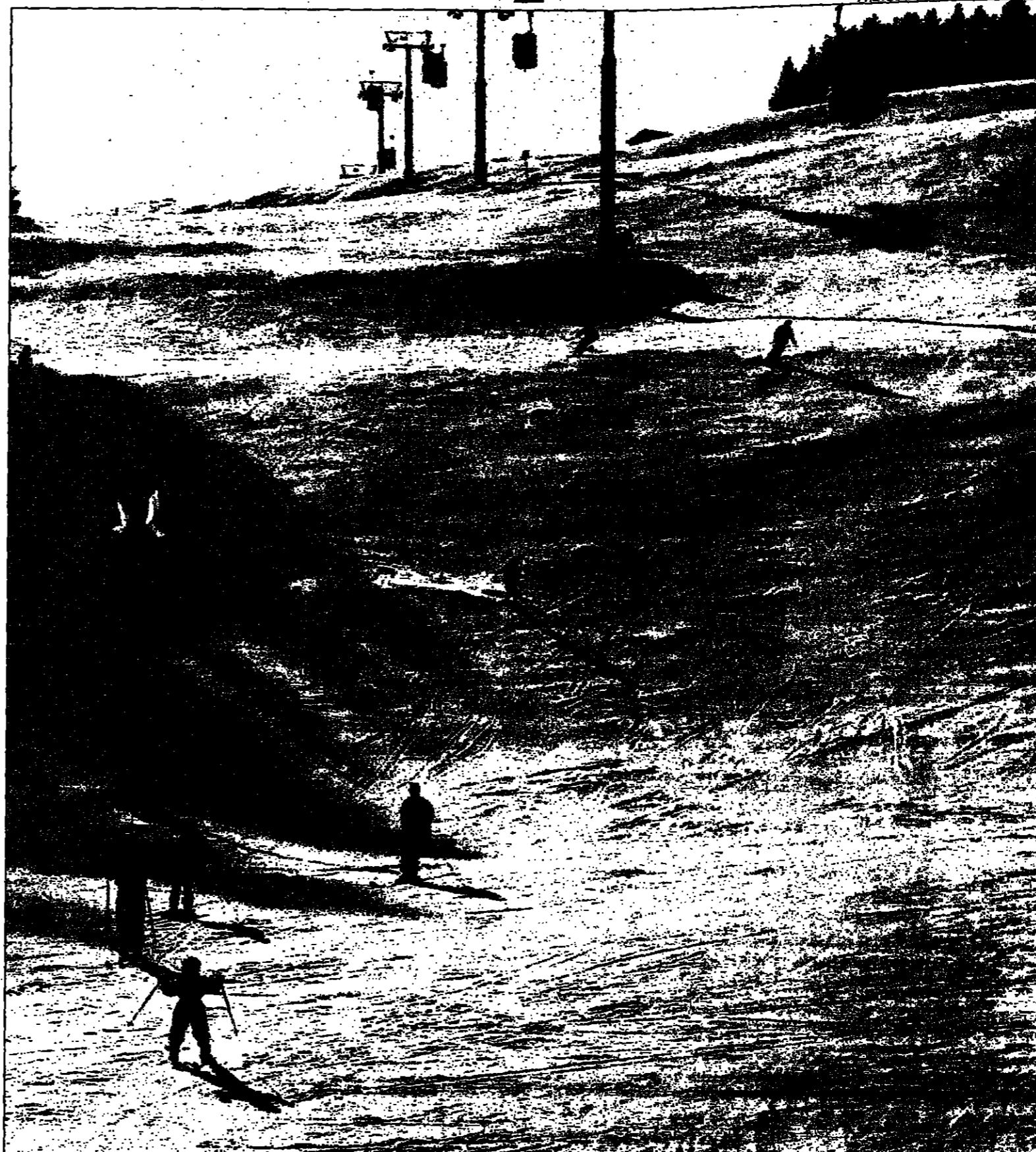
On the Tuesday we took the *télécabine*, a small cable car, to the Avenue du Mont D'Arbois and skied down a green (easy) piste. Easy for experienced skiers, perhaps, but for us it was like descending Everest.

At one stage we skied into thick mist and my spectacles

On Friday, during our last lesson, Dennis shot off the piste, crashed down an embankment on to the edge of a forest and disappeared under a large fir tree. Marielle looked pale as she raced to his rescue. "Deneez, Deneez, are you OK?" she called into the foliage. "Let me count everything and I'll let you know," he replied, splitting twigs and leaves from his mouth.

I decided to make the most of the last afternoon and took the cable car to the foot of Mont Joux where I could take a button lift and practise skiing down a long piste over and over again. I was enjoying myself when I was overtaken by a rescue team with an injured skier on a stretcher. They stopped on a ridge and radioed for a helicopter. By the time the drama was over it was too late to get the cable car back to the hotel.

Take that green piste signposted St Gervais. It's easy," said a Frenchman stationed at a first-aid hut. Half



Cable cars glide above skiers on the slopes at Le Bettex. "I was never quite sure whether I was completely in control and going to get out of it alive"

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

When a competent defender voluntarily offers declarer an alternative line of play which would not otherwise be available, it is unlikely to be a winning line. This is a case in point, from the EBU Northern Pairs in Risley.

Dealer South North-South game Matchpointed pairs

♦K97652	4103
♦VJ	92
♦74	49652
♦AJ56	♦Q10742
♦QJ	
♦10978	
♦AKQ10	
♦K53	
♦A84	
♦VAKQ8543	
♦83	
♦9	

an hour and a couple of tumbles later I could see the rooftops of Le Bettex below. Two pistes seemed to merge and I found myself on a steep run with a slalom banner across the finishing line.

"I was just about to put my boots on and come to look for you," said Dick, our holiday rep, rather worried. "You're the last back," I explained about the helicopter rescue and my route back. "I hear that you are partially colour blind," Dick said. "That last part was a red [difficult] run."

When I got home, my father phoned to make sure I had returned in one piece. "Skiing sounds a bit risky to me," he said. "By the way, I've got some bad news. Your brother fell over on a business trip while you were away and broke his arm in two places."

The author travelled with HF Holidays, Imperial House, Edgeware Road, London NW9 5AL (brochure 0181-905 9388, reservations 0181-905 9389). It is running ski courses for beginners at Le Bettex from March 8.

● The cost for half-board, ski boots, ski school and ski pass is £668.

■ GO to a local dry ski slope to learn the basics. Private tuition costs about £25 an hour. Group lessons are cheaper and more fun.

■ TAKE a ski jacket and salopettes. Separates are better than a skisuit because you can take the jacket off if you get hot. Ski gloves are a must. A bobble hat is useful. Thermal cotton polo neck jumpers and sweatshirts can be just as warm.

■ TAKE a first-aid kit. Compeed skin repair plasters are recommended in case boots rub and for blisters.

■ TAKE a bum bag to carry essential money, suncream and your insurance card.

defence a vital third trick (every trick is vital at matchpointed pairs).

Declarer's choice of play was somewhat insulting to West, as well as unsuccessful. Seeing potential for a spade trick, but no prospects in trumps, West would hardly have been co-operative enough to play a third diamond.

■ David Muller organises an Under-19's bridge club at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club. Activities include Duplicate Bridge Pairs, Minibridge and supervised practice.

The next meetings are on February 23 and March 15. Details: D Muller on 0181-952 2936; Young Chelsea Bridge Club on 0171-373 1665.

■ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Polgar's reverse

Judit Polgar, the chess prodigy from Budapest, amazed the chess community by sweeping into an early lead in the super-tournament in Linares in Spain. Amongst her victims was Vassily Ivanchuk, ranked in the world's top six and considered by many as a potential future world champion. Nevertheless, as we saw last week, Polgar, playing with the traditionally disadvantageous black pieces, smashed Ivanchuk's resistance in a mere 19 moves.

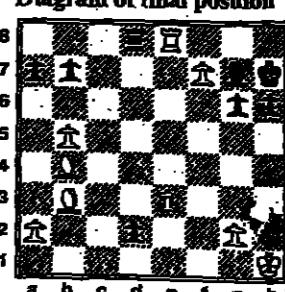
The first setback for Polgar came in the seventh round, when she had to face Vladimir Kramnik, the highly talented Russian grandmaster. Although she appeared to emerge from the opening with a more than satisfactory position with two highly mobile central pawns, she overplayed her hand and allowed Kramnik to transpose into a winning endgame.

White: Vladimir Kramnik
Black: Judit Polgar
Linares, February 1997

King's Indian Defence

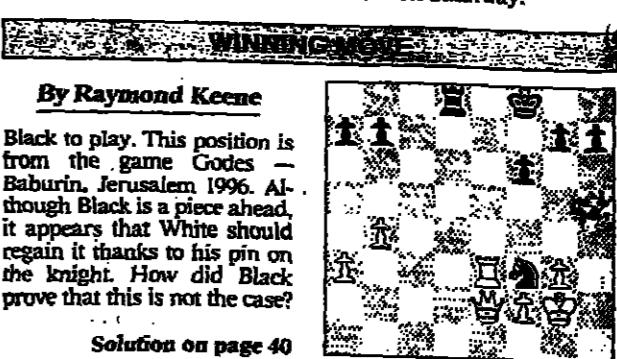
1	Nf3	Nf6	Bx6
2	c4	g6	Qx6
3	Nc3	Bg7	Nc4
4	d4	Qd6	d5
5	Qd4	0-0	Qd4
6	Bc2	e5	Qd4
7	0-0	Nf6	d4
8	Qd5	Ne4	Qd4
9	Qd4	Qd7	Rd4
10	Rf1	Qd7	Rd7
11	Rf5	Nf6	Qd5
12	Rf3	Qd7	Qd5
13	Rf3	Qd5	Qd7
14	Qd5	h5	Rd8

Diagram of final position



With one round to go in Linares, Kasparov and Kramnik share the lead with 7½ points out of ten. These two must face each other in the final round and their battle will decide the outcome of first place.

■ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.



WINNING

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Kasparov vs. Black, Jerusalem 1996. Although Black is a piece ahead, it appears that White should regain it thanks to his pin on the knight. How did Black prove that this is not the case?

Solution on page 40



THE TIMES MONDAY FEBRUARY 17 1997

Court of Appeal

Appeal right does not affect judicial review

Regina v Hereford Magistrates' Court, Ex parte Rowlands
Regina v Same, Ex parte Ingram
Regina v Harrow Youth Court, Ex parte Prussa
 Before Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice, and Mr Justice Moses [Judgment February 10]

The existence of a right of appeal to the crown court did not preclude a person convicted of offences by the magistrates' court from seeking relief by way of judicial review where the complaint raised was of procedural unreasonableness, unfairness or bias.

The Divisional Court so stated when:

I Granting applications by Tracy Rowlands and Karl Ingram for judicial review of (a) refusals by Hereford justices on March 7 and 8, 1996, to adjourn their trial to enable two defence witnesses to give evidence and (b) their convictions on March 8, the court quashed the convictions and remitted the matter.

2 Refusing Gary Prussa's application for judicial review of (a) the refusal by Harrow Youth Court of an application that he be entitled at his trial to sit in the well of the court rather than the dock and to disqualify themselves from hearing the case, and (b) his conviction.

In the first two applications, the applicants sought an adjournment to enable two independent witnesses who were critical to the defence to attend to give evidence. For a number of reasons the trial had previously been adjourned three times and the justices, declining the fresh application, proceeded to trial and conviction. The applicants claimed unfairness.

In the third case the applicant, who was on bail in respect of other more serious charges, appealed on certain charges in the youth court where he was placed in the dock flanked by custody officers.

On the case being adjourned, his counsel, having informed the justices of the more serious charges, unsuccessfully sought an order binding any subsequent bench (i) that the applicant should not sit in the dock so that the bench would not know of the outstanding charge, and (ii) disqualifying that bench from hearing the case. The applicant challenged the refusals on the ground that there was a real danger of bias resulting from his presence in the dock and disclosure of the other charges.

Mr Ian Glen QC and Mr Kerry Barker for Miss Rowlands and Mr Ingram; Mr Richard Gordon QC and Mr Paul Bowen for Mr Prussa; Mr Peter Clarke for the prosecution, the justices did not appear and were not represented.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE, giving the judgment of the court,

said that common to each application was a question of considerable legal and practical significance concerning the use of Order 53 of the Rules of the Supreme Court to challenge on the grounds of procedural unreasonableness, unfairness or bias decisions of magistrates where the applicant had a right to appeal, or would have had such a right had he exercised it in time, in the crown court.

The question was prompted by *R v Peterborough Magistrates' Court, Ex parte Dowler* (*The Times* 24, 1996; [1996] 2 Cr App R 50). While it was accepted that case was rightly decided on the findings the court there made, the present applicants criticised the rationale of the decision and the practical guidance it was understood to have given.

Magistrates' courts were the work-horses of the criminal justice system in England and Wales, handling the vast majority of criminal cases and for most citizens representing the face of criminal justice.

Given their central role it was of obvious importance that they should so far as possible interpret and apply the law correctly and reasonably, a principle referred to the two rights of appeal conferred by Parliament:

1 By section 108 of the Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, to the crown court against conviction or sentence, where the right of appeal was to be exercised by the defendant within 21 days, the appeal being by way of a full trial before a crown court judge sitting with justices, at which full evidence might be called, the burden of proof lying on the prosecution, and the case being determined on the material presented in the crown court. That was the ordinary avenue of appeal for a defendant who complained that the magistrates' court had reached a wrong decision of fact or of mixed fact and law.

2 By section 111 of the 1980 Act, by way of case stated to the High Court whereby any party to the proceedings before the magistrates' court who was aggrieved by a conviction, order, determination or other proceeding of the court might question it on the ground that it was wrong in law or in excess of jurisdiction.

The right was to be exercised within 21 days, and on the making of such an application the applicant's right to appeal to the crown court ceased. That was the ordinary avenue of appeal for a convicted defendant who complained that the justices had erred in law.

It was clear from authority that if a magistrates' court convicted a defendant after radically departing from well known principles of justice and procedure the defendant might challenge his conviction as wrong in law by way of case stated: see *Rigby v Woodward*

[1957] 1 WLR 250; *R v Wandsworth Justices, Ex parte Read* [1942] KB 251.

For most of the present century at least, certiorari had proved the usual if not inevitable means of pursuing challenges based on unfairness, bias or procedural irregularity in magistrates' courts. The cases showing that were legion.

In a number of cases, of which some were cited in *Dowler*, the courts had stated that a remedy by way of judicial review should not be granted where an alternative remedy existed. An applicant was expected to exhaust all other remedies open to him before seeking judicial review; otherwise the court might deny relief in the exercise of its discretion.

The submission that defendants complaining of unfairness and procedural irregularity should exhaust their appellate right in the crown court before seeking relief under Order 53 was rejected in *R v Bradford Justices, Ex parte Wilkinson* [1990] 1 WLR 201 and *R v British Magistrates' Court, Ex parte Dowler* [1994] RTR 40.

In *Dowler* the court in refusing relief made plain that it regarded the application for judicial review as made with the ulterior purpose of procuring such delay as would lead to the dropping of the prosecution. In practice the case had been treated as authority for denying relief by way of judicial review even in cases where no appeal to the crown court was denied and the applicant was not accorded seeking to procure delay for ulterior reasons.

The court had held, first, that there was no principle or authority to suggest that a person was entitled to more than one fair trial, while different considerations might apply to domestic and other statutory tribunals, the court relied on observations of Lord Wilberforce in *Calvin v Carr* [1980] AC 574, 593.

There were three objections to that reasoning:

1 Parliament had expressly conferred a right to trial in the crown court following trial before justices and in doing so had to be taken to have intended that there should be two trials not vitiated by unfairness or procedural irregularity.

2 If a defendant complaining of unfairness or procedural irregularity in the magistrates' court pursued his appeal, as he was strictly entitled to do, by way of case stated he would, if successful, obtain two fair trials. The ordinary result would be the quashing of the unfair conviction and an order for trial before the justices. If he were again convicted he still had his right to a retrial in the crown court.

3 The board's advice in *Calvin v Carr* was not supportive of the decision in *Dowler*. The observations relied on were directed to that reasoning:

Administrative and domestic proceedings. The board was not dealing with cases in which a criminal penalty had been imposed following an unfair procedure.

In the *Bradford Justices* case the court was plainly right to regard a party's right to fairness as stronger in criminal proceedings in the magistrates' courts than in administrative or domestic tribunals.

The court in *Dowler* had relied on *R v Barnes, Ex parte Lord Vernon* [1990] 102 LT 560 and *R v Mid-Worcestshire Justices, Ex parte Hart* [1989] COD 307 where the right of appeal to quarter sessions or the crown court was treated as a ground for denying judicial review. However, both cases were unusual on their facts and could have no application where a defendant had not appealed to the crown court. Even where he had, it was always a question of discretion whether judicial review was granted.

In *Dowler* the court had pointed out that if a defendant wished to challenge his conviction by justices on its merits and seek retrial for procedural unfairness he should do so by appeal under section 108, rather than under section 111, since on the latter route he would lose his right of appeal to the crown court.

But if, contrary to the prevailing practice, he raised a complaint of

procedural unfairness by way of appeal, he might, if successful, obtain a fair retrial before the justices, with a further right of appeal to the crown court.

Further, if the defendant appealed to the crown court, while he would obtain a fair trial, he would not obtain redress for the unfairness in the magistrates' court of which he complained, since the crown court had no supervisory jurisdiction over the conduct of magistrates' courts.

It was not doubted that *Dowler* was correctly decided but the decision was not to be treated as authority that a party complaining of procedural unfairness or bias in the magistrates' court should be denied leave to move for judicial review and left to whatever right he might have in the crown court.

So leave to move should not be granted unless the applicant advanced an apparently plausible complaint which, if made good, might arguably be held to vitiate the proceedings in the magistrates' court.

Immaterial and minor deviations from best principles would not have that effect and the court should be respectful of the discretionary decisions of magistrates' courts as of all other courts. The Divisional Court should be slow to intervene, and should do so only where good, or arguably good, grounds were shown.

2 The decision whether to grant relief by way of judicial review was a discretionary one. Many factors might properly influence the exercise of discretion and it would be foolish and impossible to seek to anticipate them all.

The need for the applicant to make full disclosure of all matters relevant to the exercise of discretion should require no emphasis.

However, the existence of a right of appeal in the crown court, particularly if unexercised, should not ordinarily weigh against the grant of leave to move, or of substantive relief in a proper case.

Solicitors: Beaumonts, Hereford; Lamie Corner & Co, Hereford; Alexander & Partners, Willesden; Crown Prosecution Service, Dronfield and Harrow.

2 Notes of caution should be sounded:

Limitation period in insolvency

Gadd, Mr Nigel Davis, QC and Mr Michael McParland for Mrs Gadd.

LORD JUSTICE PETER GIBSON said that the first question was whether the phrase "in the course of the winding up of a company" in section 214 was "a period of limitation . . . prescribed by or under any other enactment" for the purposes of section 30 of the Limitation Act 1980.

The first thing to note was that the words used in section 214 and in section 212 of the 1980 Act for a declaration that a company knew or ought to have concluded that there was no reasonable prospect that a company would avoid going into insolvent liquidation and that he should make a contribution to the assets of the company, were very similar. The words used in section 214 were that he was to "recover any sum recoverable by virtue of any enactment" and the six-year limitation period laid down in section 9(1) of the Limitation Act 1980 applied as no other period of limitation was prescribed by section 214 so as to satisfy section 39 of the Limitation Act.

The Court of Appeal so held in dismissing an appeal by the liquidators from a decision of Mr Justice Blackburn to strike out for want of prosecution proceedings brought under section 214 against Mr Richard Gadd and Mrs Ada Gadd, sole directors of Farmizer (Products) Ltd.

Mr David Oliver, QC for the liquidators; Mr Nigel Davis, QC and Ms Sarah Harman for the Mr

be found in sections 212, 213 and 214 of the 1980 Act. In the case of section 212 the phrase could be read as amount to the prescribing of a period of limitation: see *In re Lands Allotment Co* [1994] 1 Ch 516.

It would be surprising if the same introductory phrase was intended by Parliament to have such significance for limitation purposes as respect of section 213 and 214 when it was well established that it could have no such significance for section 212 in which it also appeared.

His Lordship also concluded,

from examination of the statutory provisions, that section 214

provisions were for the recovery

of a sum of money which the court

declared the delinquent respondent liable to contribute to the assets of the company. That did not, of course, preclude the liquidator accepting property other than money to satisfy that liability.

The words "if in the course of

the winding up of a company it appears . . . to mean if it ap-

peared to the court. They governed

the period of jurisdiction of the

court to make an order and were

not expressed to govern the

commencement of proceedings.

Second, the same phrase was to

be found in section 212, 213 and 214 of the 1980 Act. In the case of section 212 the phrase could be read as amount to the prescribing of a period of limitation: see *In re Lands Allotment Co* [1994] 1 Ch 516.

It would be surprising if the same introductory phrase was intended by Parliament to have such significance for limitation purposes as respect of section 213 and 214 when it was well established that it could have no such significance for section 212 in which it also appeared.

His Lordship had no difficulty in holding that section 9(1) was the applicable provision of the 1980 Act.

Lord Justice Butler-Sloss and

Lord Justice Peter Agar agreed.

Solicitors: Dibb, Lupton

Brownhead; Sprecher Grier

Edward Lewis & Co.

Admissibility of intercepts

record of a telephone conversation between him and a Mr Ghassan Barakat, a tip having been placed on the British Telecom line with the consent of Barakat.

Mr Spencer argued that the trial judge was wrong to reject his submission that the combined effect of sections 1 and 9 of the 1985 Act was such as to render the substance of the conversation inadmissible, in the light of the judgments in the House of Lords in *Preston*, which overruled the Court of Appeal's judgment in *Effik*. *Effik* also went on appeal to the House of Lords, the Court of Appeal's decision being upheld but on different grounds.

It seemed to their Lordship, that the reason why the Court of Appeal's judgment in *Effik* was overruled was as a result of the combined effect of section 20(1) and section 6 of the 1985 Act.

Lord Musill had held in *Preston* that section 20(1), which related to the issuing of a warrant for the purpose of preventing or detecting serious crime, should be narrowly construed, relating only to the first and second stages of fighting crime, namely first threatening and second seeking out of a person, not so foreseen, which had already been committed, but did not extend to the prosecution of an offence.

On that reading of section 20(1) there would be no need to make explicit provision for the admissibility of materials which by virtue of section 6 would no longer exist, and the purpose of section 9 could be seen as the protection not of the fruits of the intercepts but of information as to the manner in which they were authorised and carried out.

Sections 2 and 6 had no application in the present case where the interception was consensual and indeed apart from sections 1 and 9(1)(a) all the other main provisions of the Act were solely concerned with the issue of warrants.

Accordingly, where the interception was consensual, section 9(1)(a) was not sufficient by itself to prevent admissibility of the substance of such intercepts.

Furthermore, since it was irrelevant to the question of admissibility of the evidence whether an offence had been committed in the obtaining of it, no proper question could in any event be asked in cross-examination to establish that an offence had been committed. The appeal of Choudhary was therefore dismissed.

Rasol's appeal was allowed on other grounds.

Solicitors: Malik Adams, Manchester; Crown Prosecution Service, North West.

AN EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER

Exclusive screenings of *The Crucible*

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THE TIMES
CRUCIBLE
TICKETS
OFFER
TOKEN 1

HOW TO GET YOUR COMPLIMENTARY CINEMA TICKETS
 Collect four differently numbered tokens from *The Times* and attach them to the voucher which will be published on Thursday. Present the completed voucher and tokens at one of the cinemas listed at the specified time of the screening (not before — except for UCI cinemas, see above*). The voucher entitles you to two seats only for a screening of *The Crucible* on Monday, February 24, 1997. Seats will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis and are subject to availability.

Daniel Day-Lewis, the farmer whose conscience is tested; Bruce Davison, the vicar embroiled in plans for revenge; Winona Ryder, one of the "witches"; and Paul Scofield, the judge presiding over the witch trials

CHANGING TIMES

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STATISTICS

TODAY

Interim: Allied Carpet, Jupiter General Capital & Income Fund, Regent Inns, Second Alliance Trust, First, Low & Bonar, Trust of Property Shares, Updown Investment Company. Economic statistics: US stock and bond markets closed.

TOMORROW

Interim: John Haggas, Macro. 4. Final: Barclays, Intra Permeant, Peptide Therapeutics, St. Steven Properties, Sedgwick, SmithKline Beecham, Stadium Group. Economic statistics: UK PSBR (January), Bundesbank call rate, Italian producer prices index (December), BTM/Schroder-Wertheim weekly US chain store sales report, US Treasury short-term T-bills. API weekly oil supply statistics.

WEDNESDAY

Interim: none scheduled. Final: Finsbury Investment Company, Kinsman Overseas, London Forgings, Merton, Powar, Rights & Issues Investment Trust, WPP Group. Economic statistics: UK retail sales (January), US consumer prices index (January), US trade deficit (December).

THURSDAY

Interim: Bolton Group, Gifford Shin, Carlisle Shipping, City Site Estates, Crane Europe, Easynet Group, Provident Financial, Rank Group, Economic statistics: UK building societies net new commitments (January), UK provisional Mo money supply (December), Bundesbank central council report, US weekly jobless claims, US housing starts (January).

FRIDAY

Interim: Allied Leisure, VDC. Final: none scheduled. Economic statistics: UK CBI industrial trends survey, UK provisions GDP (Q4).

SUNDAY TIMES

The Sunday Times: "Buy Rolls-Royce, Racal, SmithKline Beecham, Dagenham Motors, Bryant, Avond Kenwood, Dalgate, The Sunday Telegraph: Buy Alfred McAlpine, Telewest Communications, Thistle Hotels, Jevey Group, Mail on Sunday: Buy Jardine's Interiors; Hold Pemberton's, Chubb Security, Sell Cairn Energy, British Borneo, Westmount Energy.

The first notable event of the British economic week is to-day's testimony before the Treasury Select Committee by Eddie George and Howard Davies, Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England. After last week's *Inflation Report*, the current views of the Bank on inflation and interest rates are well known, but these sessions often throw up some interesting nuances. For euro-watchers, there is also a meeting of European finance ministers in Brussels.

January figures for public borrowing are published tomorrow. The market consensus, as compiled by

Rank in need of fresh impetus



Andrew Tare, chief executive of Rank. He faces the task of selling Xerox stake

RANK GROUP: Full-year figures on Thursday will come under close scrutiny from the market following December's trading update that forced brokers to downgrade their profit estimates yet again.

It was the nature of the profits warning that upset the City. The group made it clear that there were problems at its Hard Rock chain of restaurants, which had been seen by many as the driving force for Rank's future earnings growth. The figures under review are unlikely to reveal much improvement in the state of play at Hard Rock. The business has been undergoing a heavy refurbishment programme in the face of increased competition.

Group profits are expected to grow by around 10 per cent from £27.2 million to £29.8 million, while earnings growth is likely to be down 5 per cent, at 22.8p.

Other tasks facing the group, whose chief executive is Andrew Tare, are the sale of its remaining stake in Rank Xerox and the problem of returning some of the proceeds to shareholders. At the same time, the Rank management must face up to the task of finding a way to grow the rest of the business once the sale of Rank Xerox has been completed.

In the meantime, shareholders will be rewarded with a 5 per cent increase in the payout, from 15.75p to 16.5p net.

SMITHKLINE BEECHAM: A strong performance by its US pharmaceutical division should provide another useful increase in earnings when the group unveils full-year figures tomorrow. According to NatWest Securities, the broker, they should show pre-tax profits up 15 per cent, from £1.36 billion to £1.56 billion, while earnings climb 11 per cent, to 37.6p.

The pharmaceutical side will provide the main thrust to those earnings following a strong final quarter in 1996. Sales of Paxil/Seroxat, the anti-depressant treatment, and Augmentin, its antibiotic

treatment, will alone account for 36 per cent of total sales. P&G has been aggressively grabbing market share in the United States, with prescriptions up around 35 per cent in the final three months.

Shareholders are likely to be rewarded by a 10 per cent increase in the payout, to 15.8p.

BARCLAYS: The bank is expected to unveil pre-tax profits of around £2.4 billion tomorrow after another solid performance in 1996 when the shares comfortably outpaced the 11.7 per cent rise in the FT All-Share Index. Analysts at Salomon Brothers have trimmed their profit forecast, albeit modestly, on the assumption of a less rewarding second half for BZW, the group's investment banking arm, than had previously been assumed.

BZW enjoyed a good first half, chipping in a 23 per cent increase in operating profits to £157 million, on the back of significantly higher trading activities and fee-based businesses. Personnel changes in BZW's fixed income department may also have added to costs. At the half-year stage last August, Barclays surprised the City with a £470 million share buyback after announcing a 15 per cent rise in profits to £1.3 billion. The speculation is that Barclays could have as much as £600 million in hand to repeat the share buyback exercise this week, or alternatively the money could be used for some other capital management programme.

MEDEVA: The fast-growing pharmaceutical group is likely to report further solid progress on Wednesday when it unveils full-year figures.

They are expected to show pre-tax profits up £20 million, at £99 million, an increase of 25 per cent. Earnings growth will be a more modest 17 per cent, at 19.3p, while shareholders should enjoy a 20 per cent increase in the payout to 4.8p.

Once again the main drive to profitability will come from Methylphenidate, its treatment for attention deficit hy-

poactivity disorder. But analysts are also looking for a revival in sales of Iosomatin, the anti-obesity treatment, which had been experiencing a slowdown in prescription-related sales during the second half.

Strong sales are also expected from its varicose division where sales of Fluvirin, its flu vaccine, will have been boosted by the withdrawal of an American competitor from the marketplace. Brokers estimate that sales will have grown last year by around 13 per cent, to £25 million. The acquisition of Rochester from Rhone Poulen Rover, and the subsequent £65 million provision, should underpin the group's 33 per cent operating margins. Strong growth from Tussionex should support a £32 million first-time sales contribution from Rochester.

SEDGWICK: Full-year figures tomorrow will be overshadowed by last week's warning from its rival, Willis Corroon, about current trading. The City is looking for the insurance broker to increase pre-tax profits by around £8 million, to £98 million, a rise of almost 10 per cent. But earnings will be down 7 per cent, at 11.9p, reflecting continuing depressed trading. As a result, the dividend is likely to be pegged at 6.5p.

The market is likely to pay close attention to the January renewal season, but rates will probably have remained weak although some increase in brokerage fees is expected in the current year. But, as NatWest points out, any top-line progress that is likely to have been made will be primarily in lower-margin business.

WPP: The advertising group is expected to report a rise in pre-tax profits to £150 million in 1996, from £14 million in the previous year. The company, which owns JWT and Ogilvy & Mather, two of the best-known brands in global advertising, has benefited from strong revenues in America, supported by the US Presidential election and the Olympic Games in Atlanta.

Scholl takes step towards total control of its brand

By ERIC REGULY

SCHOLL

the footwear and

footcare company, is ready to

take the first step in its

campaign to take control of the

brand outside Europe by ac-

quiring the Scholl operations

in Latin America. The com-

pany also wants to buy the

rights to the Scholl name in

North America.

The Latin American pur-

chase is expected to be com-

pleted by the end of the month.

The business is small — its

annual turnover is about \$10

million compared with about

£220 million at the British

company — but its owners are

expected to demand a relatively

high price because the

operations are profitable and

growing quickly.

Scholl wants to expand

overseas now that a £30

million restructuring it un-

veiled in September has been

largely completed. The shares

have since climbed by about

50 per cent to 30p. The latest

restructuring, including the

disposal of non-core products

such as cosmetics, and the

rationalisation of the Euro-

pean warehousing and retil-

ing operations, was triggered

in 1995 by the arrival of rebel

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Union offers new plan to transform the Post Office

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

THE Post Office should be transformed into an independent public sector company to give it greater commercial freedom, according to new proposals which are likely to be closely followed if Labour is elected to government.

The plans, which are likely to be welcomed by the Post Office, offer a way forward that is neither the outright privatisation sought by the present Government, nor the Post Office's current full public sector operation, which senior managers say is threatening the Post Office's ability to deal with increased competition.

The proposals are also significant in that they come from the Post Office's main trade

union, which only a few months ago was locked in a series of strikes at the Royal Mail, but which is now putting forward measures aimed at forming a consensus on the issue.

The Communication Workers' Union's own green paper on the future of the Post Office puts forward proposals for change to allow it to meet competition from international postal services and technological change.

Alan Johnson and Tony Young, joint general secretaries of the CWU, claim the Post Office is under-investing, and it needs to be given greater access to capital to push its investment level up from

about £350 million annually to £450 million.

The union argues that it should be possible for the Post Office to remain in public ownership and give it greater commercial freedom through a interlocking package of measures. These include:

□ New legal status. The Post Office should become a public corporation operating under a Parliamentary charter that would allow it to borrow commercially and form joint ventures. The charter would guarantee public service obligations.

□ New borrowing regime. It would be moved outside the framework of the public sector borrowing requirement, and would be financially independent of government.

□ New dividends. Instead of handing back money to the Treasury in terms set by ministers, the Post Office should pay dividends to the Government as shareholder, set by the Post Office board in the light of financial performance. If the current regime were to be maintained, though, the cash payment should be set at no more than 40 per cent of pre-tax profits.

□ New price cap. With new commercial freedom, the union will argue that the monopoly part of the Post Office's activities should be subject to price controls.

□ New regulation. An independent regulator, in the form of a small regulatory panel rather than a single individual, should be established.

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Apple updates laptop

Apple Computer, the troubled US manufacturer, today unveils a new PowerBook laptop, updated Power Macintosh desktop computers, new digital camera and a laptop for children.

The products are part of Apple's three-year plan to increase sales. It said that its new PowerBook 3400, priced from \$4,500 to \$6,500, is one of the fastest laptops ever built and features the speedy PowerPC 603e microprocessor, a built-in modem and four sound.

Apple also will unveil updated models in its Power Macintosh computers aimed at business users and desktop publishers. For the education market, it will introduce the eMate 300, a laptop based on its handheld Newton computer. The company will also put on show the QuickTake 200, a \$600 digital camera that records photographs in computer memory.

Care campaign

Christian Action Research & Education (Care), an action group campaigning for family rights, is lobbying Parliament for an increase in the married couple's allowance, which it claims has decreased substantially in real terms. Care points out that in the last Budget the personal allowance was increased by £200 more than inflation, while the married couple's allowance was increased in line with inflation. It wants the increase to be the same.

Motoring rise

Motor insurance premiums rose by an average 5 to 10 per cent in 1996 and are set to rise by the same amount again this year, according to Touchline Insurance. It says insurers have been gradually increasing premiums using specialist underwriting techniques and accurate risk-profiling.

Athletic Grade

Michael Grade, newly appointed chairman of First Leisure, is joining the board of Charlton Athletic Football Club as non-executive director. He is described as a lifelong supporter. Charlton is to seek a listing on the Alternative Investment Market and expects to raise £6 million to fund the redevelopment of its Valley stadium in London.

Airlines link

Air UK and KLM, the Dutch airline, are to combine sales and marketing operations in Britain. The joint venture, fully operational from April 1, will have an annual turnover of about £400 million. Air UK and KLM have a total of 69 flights a day from 18 UK airports to Amsterdam, connecting to more than 150 cities via Amsterdam's Schiphol airport on the KLM network.



Jon Foulds and Mike Blackburn are hoping to see a good turnout from Halifax members at next week's special meeting at the Sheffield Arena

Halifax pleased with response of members in conversion vote

BY MARIANNE CURPHAY

MILLIONS of Halifax members are expected to have cast their vote in favour of the building society's conversion into a bank by close of business today.

It is the culmination of a huge advertising campaign aimed at reminding Halifax's eight million customers to return their voting forms. The Halifax has declined to give details of the way the voting has gone, but management has pronounced it is "pleased with the response" so far.

Jon Foulds, chairman, and Mike Blackburn, chief executive, will be keen for as many people as possible to attend its special meeting in a week's time at Sheffield Arena, where they will be able to vote in person. A spokeswoman for the society emphasised that all members needed to vote. The Sheffield Arena holds 11,000.

Monday February 24 is also an important date for members who have more than £1,000 in their accounts on November 24, 1994, because they need to top up their balances to qualify for the variable distribution of shares. The shareout will be based on the lower of two

balances, either November 25, 1994, or February 24, 1997.

Halifax will begin mailing qualifying members next month, with details of its share-dealing service. Up to 20 per cent of members are expected to sell their shares, worth an average £1,300, on the first day of trading. Shares will be priced at between 390p and 450p.

Rob Thomas, building society analyst with UBS, believes

the shares could be worth more if the housing market continues to be buoyant. "At present, Abbey National shares have been in demand because the market is buying them as a proxy for converting societies, since Abbey was the first building society to convert in 1989," he said.

Gary Marsh, assistant general manager of the Halifax, said more details about the share-dealing service would

be sent to members next month. They will be asked whether they want to sell or keep shares by ticking a box.

Free dealing will be available for a limited period, although only members who wish to buy shares will be able to do so by telephone. Those who wish to sell via the Halifax dealing service will have to use the postal service.

Meanwhile, the Woolwich is on course to float by July 7,

after last week's vote in favour of the conversion. Some 70 per cent of investing members who were entitled to vote did so, and of these, 95 per cent backed the proposals.

The society is expected to have a market capitalisation of £3 billion. The 257 million qualifying members will get payoffs worth an average £1,200. The basic distribution will be 450 shares, priced between 175p and 200p.

US legal threat to swap contracts

BY JASON NISSE

BILLIONS of pounds of swap contracts could be under threat unless US law is amended to take account of European Monetary Union.

Under swap deals, different securities are exchanged to get more advantageous exchange and interest rates.

The International Swaps and Derivatives Association (ISDA) is hoping to put proposals for a change in the law to the New York State legislature

in Albany in the next few weeks.

It needs to have the law in place in order to alter the master agreements that govern more than 90 per cent of the world's hundreds of billions of pounds of swap contracts, otherwise there is a danger that swap deals involving European currencies and written under US law might become invalid after 1999 when EMU starts.

However the ISDA is encountering problems because of the complexity of the change in the law, and the concern that a poorly worded law could leave loopholes under which people who suffer as the result of swap contracts could sue the other side of the deal.

The majority of swap deals are covered by either UK or US law. The UK deals do not have a problem because of a change to the Treaty of Rome

agreed in December which ensures continuity of contract for deals struck in individual European currencies once they combine to form the Euro.

The securities markets are concerned that EMU will cost them heavily and bring a big fall in business. Other legal problems could hit over £50 billion of bonds issued in Ecu before 1992, when the Maastricht treaty was signed.

Windfall Bill makes progress

BY MARIANNE CURPHAY

ELDERLY widows and disabled people came a step nearer to inclusion in building society windfall shareouts after the Commons success of a Private Member's Bill.

The draft Building Societies Bill, piloted by Douglas French, Conservative MP for Gloucester, will receive its first reading in the Lords today, followed by a second debate on February 28.

If successful, it would restore the rights of the elderly and disabled to share in the spoils of converting societies. Most have been excluded because they are not the first named on the account, and

societies have consistently claimed that only first-named account holders are members.

Last August *The Times* exposed the plight of residents in nursing homes, hospitals and hostels who were unable to operate their own building society accounts and missed out on windfalls.

Mr French said: "There is now a strong possibility that this Bill could go on the statute book, although it will not be retrospective. However, if it does become law, it will be difficult for societies which converted this year to continue to ignore the plight of members they have excluded."

Currency strength may spark pressure to reduce base rate

Prices will bring inflation below 2.5 per cent late this year and keep it around that mark in 1998. Wage growth and profit margins are unlikely to rise sharply enough to offset the disinflationary impact of sterling's rise. Growth is modestly above trend, but the economy is not yet hitting capacity limits. In particular, the CBI survey of skilled labour shortages remains below its average level. The high level of job vacancies, which, on the surface, might imply that the jobs market is stretched, is significantly exaggerated by data problems stemming from the

same tax rates, and probably the same inflation target (this has yet to be officially confirmed). Indeed, in its early stages, a Labour Government would probably be more willing to raise base rates to keep inflation low, if needed, than the current administration.

Similarly, Labour's desire to keep the option of joining EMU will mandate a tight fiscal stance. If new fiscal tightening is needed, for example to offset some slippage on public spending or to hasten the decline in the fiscal deficit, Labour has plenty of scope to raise revenues by cutting tax allowances — notably Advance Corporation Tax relief.

Although the approach of a general election is raising the political heat, UK political risks are not significantly greater than those in other European countries. The risks of a hung parliament have faded as the previous improvement in the Conservatives' opinion poll ratings has stalled. At the same time, Labour's proposed framework for macroeconomic policy is little different from the Conservatives' — same spending plans.

Introduction of the Job Seekers Allowance.

Although the approach of a general election is raising the political heat, UK political risks are not significantly greater than those in other European countries. The risks of a hung parliament have faded as the previous improvement in the Conservatives' opinion poll ratings has stalled. At the same time, Labour's proposed framework for macroeconomic policy is little different from the Conservatives' — same spending plans.

If sterling rises much further, and approaches its old ERM central rate, the same could happen in the UK.

MICHAEL SAUNDERS
Salomon Brothers

EMU success or failure is in the balance

BY JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

THE pros and cons of going forward with Economic and Monetary Union are too finely balanced to conclude that the project will either condemn Europe to failure or guarantee its success, a report published by The Economic Intelligence Unit today concludes.

In a detailed analysis of arguments for and against EMU, author Professor David Currie of the London Business School outlines four major threats:

□ Despite the attempts of the Maastricht treaty and the stability pact to enforce budgetary discipline, there is a possibility that government debt levels throughout the EMU area will remain high. This could keep interest rates high for all countries and inhibit investment and growth. Governments could be compelled to raise taxes or cut spending as the economy moves into recession, thus exacerbating the downturn.

□ A potentially greater danger is the "Europeanisation" of labour markets across the EMU area. Professor Currie says that a plausible nightmare could be brought about by "greater and more harmonised regulation of Europe's labour markets through the strengthening and ossification of the EU's social chapter". He argues that, in conditions of high unemployment, it is necessary that the social chapter evolves in a way consistent with labour market flexibility.

□ The euro itself could prove a volatile, if not a weak currency. There is a risk of erratic policy changes in the longer-term when conflicts arise between national representatives on the European Central Bank and member state governments.

□ The EU may fail to address the issue of enlargement of the union to the East, which Professor Currie says is perhaps the greater strategic challenge facing Europe at the present time. He argues that preoccupation with EMU is delaying attention to this issue.

Professor Currie also details some of the major potential gains from a successful EMU:

□ Because of the attention paid to the design of the ECB, the euro countries are likely to enjoy low and stable inflation.

The drawback is that governments lose the ability to respond to economic circumstances by changing their own interest rates or letting their currencies depreciate.

□ The single market could be reborn as the single currency removes the costs and uncertainties of intra-European trade.

□ The euro would strengthen competitive pressures in the banking industry, potentially lowering prices and giving consumers more choice.

□ Opportunities for investment funds would increase as pension funds and insurance companies, for example, spread their portfolios beyond their own domestic frontiers.

Barclays set for buyback

BY OUR CITY STAFF

BARCLAYS is widely expected to launch another buyback of shares tomorrow when the banking group reports full-year pre-tax profits of about £2.4 billion.

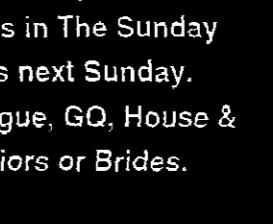
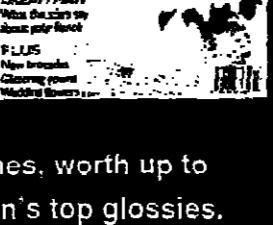
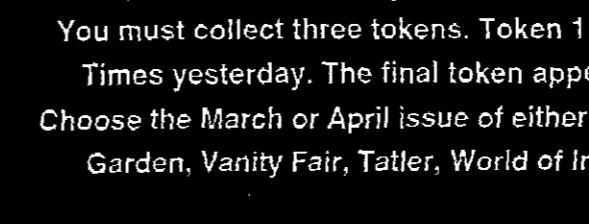
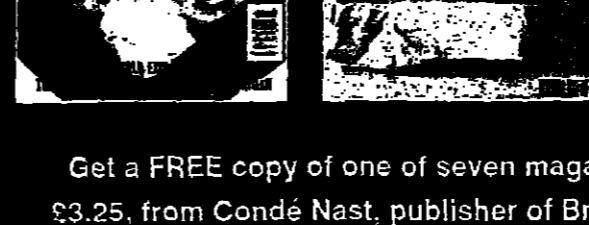
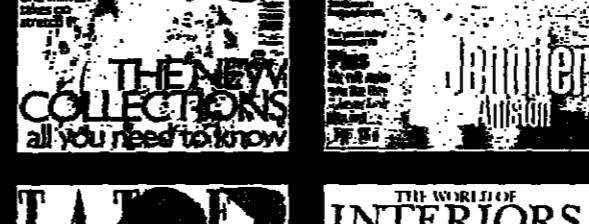
With its last three results announcements, Barclays has stemmed the build-up of surplus capital by buying back a total of almost £1 billion of shares. It spent just over £300 million after last February's results, and a further £470 million last August. Analysts with Salomon Brothers expect Barclays to spend £650 million on buybacks this year. The first instalment is likely to come tomorrow.

Some have forecast Barclays to have made £2.5 billion last year, putting it on a par with Lloyds TSB, which began the bank reporting season on Friday.

However, Barclays' de Zoete Wedd, the investment banking arm, looks set to disappoint. Costs are thought to have risen sharply and dealing income to have been dull.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

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FREE MAGAZINES TOKEN

2

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

THE TIMES
CITY DIARY

Garnett loses
by a whisker

DARE to mention Virgin in the head office of Sea Containers... First, Christopher Garnett, chief executive of Great North Eastern Railway, owned by the conglomerate, loses out to Richard Branson in the bidding for the plum InterCity West Coast rail franchise.

Next, Garnett is horribly delayed travelling back from Boston on one of the bearded one's brightly coloured planes and misses a crucial meeting with Scottish passenger representatives in Edinburgh. "Once is forgivable but twice is beginning to look like enemy action," soars our man at Sea Containers.

On cloud nine

JOHN BENTLEY is celebrating in the skies after announcing a marketing partnership with Acorn Computer Group. The smooth-talking CEO of ViewCall Europe is selling the idea of using your television, instead of your pc, to surf the Internet. Not bad for someone who can't remember when he last watched TV. "I'm forever on long-haul flights," he says. "I spend so much time on the phone up there, they're thinking of naming a satellite after me."



RAILTRACK shareholders will be delighted to hear of its philanthropic endeavours. To protect faxes, rabbits, mice and hedgehogs, Railtrack has installed tailor-made subways under the Heathrow Express high-speed rail link. The tunnels vary in size and come with hiding places "to ensure that smaller animals are not eaten by larger ones as they pass through".

The late show

THE two film producers who last year raised £400,000 from the public to film a Thomas Hardy story are at it again. Daniel Fierman and Zigi Kamasa are on the lookout for 750 angels to cough up £1,000 each for their version of Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*. Sadly for anyone who wants a peek at *The Scarlet Pimpernel* before they put money into this year's venture, they will have to wait until the preview at the Cannes film festival — after the March 14 deadline for investors. "This is for tax reasons, because people will want to invest any spare funds ahead of the new financial year, starting in April," Kamasa says.

MORAG PRESTON



Charlie "Copperfingers" Vincent has consistently denied any wrongdoing and has promised the SFO every co-operation with its inquiries

Struggle to get to the bottom of the copper scandal

Yasuo Hamanaka, who goes on trial today, may be the only one to face prosecution over the Sumitomo affair. Robert Miller explains why

No one will take a keener interest in the trial of Yasuo Hamanaka, once the uncrowned king of the world's copper markets, than our own Serious Fraud Office. In the dock of a Japanese court room today Mr Hamanaka, the former chief copper trader at Sumitomo, the Japanese trading conglomerate, will face charges of forging documents and fraud in relation to his global copper dealings that left his employers facing losses of about \$2.8 billion. Many of these trades were routed through British and American broking houses.

The evidence given by Mr Hamanaka will be pored over in minute detail by criminal and civil investigators in the UK and the United States. It will be the first time they have heard his side of the story. It was in June last year that Sumitomo made the shock announcement about its losses. Since then, however, in spite of visits to Japan by officials from the Securities and Investments Board, the City's most senior watchdog, together with Andrew Jackson, the SFO lawyer heading the criminal investigation, and officers from the City of London fraud squad, no one has had a chance to question the man at the centre of events.

The copper investigation is one of the largest and most complex of its kind ever undertaken and spans at least four jurisdictions — the UK, Japan, the US and Chile, where the affair began more than three years ago. Codeco, the Chilean state copper company, claimed that it had become the victim of a \$200 million fraud. Juan Pablo Davila, its former chief trader, is being held by the Chilean authorities. Some of Señor Davila's copper trades were executed by the Winchester Commodities Group, founded by Charlie "Copperfingers" Vincent and his less high-profile partner Ashley Levett, who owns Richmond Rugby Union Club. Both men have homes in the UK and Monte Carlo.

The Securities and Futures Authority (SFA), the UK watchdog for brokers and futures traders, began a lengthy investigation, headed by Alan King, one of the City's most experienced civil investigators, into the Winchester trades with Codeco. At its conclusion last year the SFA said that on the evidence it had to date no further action would be taken against Winchester or its directors, who are reputed to have earned £15 million in a single year.

The SFA investigation broadened because the Winchester name kept cropping up in connection with another company, Sumitomo. The trail then led to Guernsey and in May last year, the SIB, using its broader powers on behalf of the SFA, asked the Guernsey authorities to raid a number of offices in the offshore haven. The evidence seized was to have far-

reaching consequences, the effects of which are still rumbling on in the UK courts.

Today the UK civil authorities, including the London Metal Exchange, which first flagged concerns about Mr Hamanaka and his copper trades to Sumitomo and the Japanese authorities in 1991, as did the SIB, are still trying to piece together the deals done by Mr Hamanaka with UK firms. That task could take years because many trades were done through offshore centres — a perfectly legitimate tactic to throw rivals off the scent — and not through the London exchange.

The SFO, for its part, continues to

look for any evidence of fraud, or more probably a conspiracy to commit fraud, carried out in the UK jurisdiction. If none is found, and that is certainly a possibility, then the fraud office could offer its evidence to other country wanting to mount a prosecution in connection with the copper scandal. In August last year officers from the SFO, which formally began its copper inquiry last June, executed search warrants at the UK homes of Mr Vincent and Mr Levett, who have consistently denied any wrongdoing. Both have promised every co-operation with the fraud office investigation.

Documents seized in the Guernsey raid threw up a number of names besides those of the Winchester directors and this led to another SFO raid being carried out last December on the offices of Kay Accounting, a small book-keeping and accountancy firm, based in Radlett, Hertfordshire.

Here, however, the SFO met an unexpected obstacle. Goldsmiths, Kay's law firm, successfully applied for an immediate injunction to stop the SFO downloading computer information until a judicial review hearing. The material was then bagged and secured pending the full court hearing. Kay Accounting argued that the SFO search warrant, which was looking for any information connected with the copper investigation, was too widely drawn and that the firm had 250 clients, many of whom had no link with copper but whose papers were nonetheless seized.

In an audacious and unprecedented move, Kay also personally accused George Staple, the SFO director, and four of his senior colleagues of contempt of court for continuing to download computer-held material in spite of a court order to stop. Earlier this month two high court judges cleared the SFO executives of contempt, but the warrant was quashed. Thus the SFO has been put on notice.

At the end of the day the Sumitomo copper investigation is so complex, spanning so many jurisdictions, it is entirely possible that Mr Hamanaka, who has indicated that he will plead guilty to certain charges, is the only person to be prosecuted.



Yasuo Hamanaka has indicated that he will plead guilty to certain charges

CHRONOLOGY OF THE COPPER SCANDAL

- NOVEMBER 1991: The International Wrought Copper Council (IWCC), representing the industry, asks the London Metal Exchange to investigate distortions in the market. LME stocks are at seven-year highs of 315,000 tonnes, but prices are also rising. David L Threlkeld, president of David L Threlkeld and Co, asks the LME to investigate a letter in which Hamanaka asked him to confirm fictitious trades. The LME informs the Securities and Investments Board. US authorities are also informed.
- SEPTEMBER 1993: LME follows up two public warnings on copper by re-
- stricting daily backwardation to \$5 a tonne "in anticipation of the development of an undesirable situation". A squeeze was attributed by traders to a futures and options strategy by Sumitomo. It denies any attempt at manipulation.
- APRIL 1995: LME opens copper warehouses in the United States. By December stocks will soar above 61,000 tonnes, again largely controlled by Sumitomo.
- NOVEMBER 1995: IWCC again voices concern. LME investigates. David King, chief executive, seeks information on client positions and credit lines.
- DECEMBER 1995: British regulators start an investigation of the market. Prices fall by some \$250 per tonne. America's Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) contacts the SIB.
- MAY 17, 1996: Rumours circulate that Hamanaka has moved from his post.
- MAY 20: Copper prices fall to \$2,370 from above \$2,600 the previous day. Sumitomo says Hamanaka has been promoted to another post. Five million tonnes of copper cleared during May 17-20 trade.
- JUNE 12: IWCC writes to the LME, expressing concern over market volatility. LME announces that it states the concerns and confirms it has been in contact with regulators.
- JUNE 13: Sumitomo reports \$1.8 billion loss on unauthorised copper trades and says it has sacked Hamanaka.
- JUNE 16: Price crashes from \$2,378 to \$1,880 with more than one million tonnes of copper cleared during early trading.
- JUNE 17: New rumours say Hamanaka has resigned. Price falls \$200 a tonne. Sumitomo denies rumour the next day.
- JUNE 18: IWCC writes to the LME, expressing concern over market volatility. LME announces that it states the concerns and confirms it has been in contact with regulators.
- JUNE 20: Sumitomo says losses caused by Hamanaka could leave it up to 150 million yen (\$1.38 billion) in the red.
- SEPTEMBER 19: Sumitomo says losses have grown to \$2.6 billion. The company is to seek criminal charges against Hamanaka.
- OCTOBER 22: Hamanaka is arrested in Japan after Sumitomo files a complaint that he forged documents authorising copper trades.
- NOVEMBER 13: Hamanaka is served with second arrest warrant accusing him of fraud, a more serious charge than forgery.
- FEBRUARY 17, 1997: Hamanaka's trial begins.

A new way to start your day

The Mark Radcliffe Breakfast Show. Radio 1. 7.00am.

Life after Chris Evans begins today with Radcliffe moved from late nights to early mornings and charged with the huge task of trying to hold the 700,000 or so audience increase that Evans brought about. Radcliffe will broadcast from his native Manchester and, interestingly, the start time remains 7am; one of the signs of Evans during his reign was moving the start back from 6am. Other schedule changes from today include Mary Anne Hobbs taking over Radcliffe's former show at 10.30pm. Kevin Green is moving from weekends to the daily drivetime slot at 4pm and Andy Kershaw being given the evening show at 8.30pm. But Radcliffe's slot is the key audience-builder.

You Is What You Eats. Radio 3. 9.20pm.

Almost all developed countries are involved in a *guerre de cuisine* in which universal tastes imposed by multinational outlets threaten to destroy regional dishes and expunge the variety from our diets. Britain is a prime example and France is heading the same way but the United States is the country where uniformity is most in evidence. Not that its regions are giving up without a fight. In this series of five programmes Russell Davies travels from North Carolina to Texas and finds a rich variety of food, cooking styles and indeed arguments. Even the barbecue is a battlefield, with heated debate on everything from sauces to the right type of wood.

Peter Barnard

RADIO 1

7.00am Mark Radcliffe. See Choice 9.00 Simon May 12.00 Jo Whiley 2.00pm Nicki Campbell 4.00pm Steve Wright 6.00pm Radio Session 8.30 Andy Kershaw 10.30 Mary Ann Hobbs 1.00am Claire Sturges 4.00 Clive Wicks

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up To Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Anne Robinson 1.30pm Debbie Thorpe 3.00 Ed Stewart 5.05 John Dunn 7.00 Steve Wright at the Movies 7.30 Match of the Day 9.30 Saturday Band 10.30 Big Band 11.00 Hungry Littleton 10.00 Radio Days. The BBC Big Band recreates famous American dance band broadcasts (4/6) 10.30 The Jamesons 12.00am Steve Madden 3.00 Alan Lester, Alastair Pease for Thought

RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00am Morning Report 6.00 The Breakfast Programme 6.55 Racing Preview 6.55 The Magazine, with Clive Wicks 7.00am Radio 5 Live 7.30am Includes at 12.30pm Monday's 2.05 Russ on Five, includes at 3.45 Entertainment News 4.00 John Inverdale Nationwide 5.15 Includes 5.45 Entertainment News 7.00 News Extra 7.35 Gwendoline Yeo 7.45 Over The Moon 8.00 The Monday Magazine 8.30 The Monday Magazine 9.00 Hibernal v Celtic 10.00 News Talk with Jeremy Vine 11.00 Night Eats with Valerie Sander 12.00am After Hours with Linda McDermott and Tim Grundy 2.00 Up All Night

RADIO 6 MUSIC

5.00am Morning Report 6.00 The Breakfast Programme 6.55 Racing Preview 6.55 The Magazine, with Clive Wicks 7.00am Radio 6 Live 7.30am Includes 7.45 Russ on Five, includes 8.00 Entertainment News 9.00 John Inverdale Nationwide 9.30 Includes 10.00 The Monday Magazine 10.30 Hibernal v Celtic 11.00 Hibernal v Celtic 12.00 Hibernal v Celtic 1.00 Hibernal v Celtic 2.00 Hibernal v Celtic 3.00 Hibernal v Celtic 4.00 Hibernal v Celtic 5.00 Hibernal v Celtic 6.00 Hibernal v Celtic 7.00 Hibernal v Celtic 8.00 Hibernal v Celtic 9.00 Hibernal v Celtic 10.00 Hibernal v Celtic 11.00 Hibernal v Celtic 12.00 Hibernal v Celtic 1.00 Hibernal v Celtic 2.00 Hibernal v Celtic 3.00 Hibernal v Celtic 4.00 Hibernal v Celtic 5.00 Hibernal v Celtic 6.00 Hibernal v Celtic 7.00 Hibernal v Celtic 8.00 Hibernal v Celtic 9.00 Hibernal v Celtic 10.00 Hibernal v Celtic 11.00 Hibernal v Celtic 12.00 Hibernal v Celtic 1.00 Hibernal v Celtic 2.00 Hibernal v Celtic 3.00 Hibernal v Celtic 4.00 Hibernal v Celtic 5.00 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HOME SHOPPING

Supermarkets target the couch potato

BUSINESS

MONDAY FEBRUARY 17 1997

METAL MAZE 42

Struggle to get to the bottom of copper scandal



BUSINESS EDITOR LINDSAY COOK

Demerged British Gas welcomes dawn of a new era

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY AND MICHAEL CLARK

BRITISH GAS splits itself into two this morning as official trading begins in BG, the renamed old British Gas shares, and Centrica, the demerged gas supply business.

Around 1.7 million small shareholders will receive one new Centrica share for each British Gas share they currently hold. They will be able to trade today even if they have not yet received their new certificate. The 1.7 million are the surviving band of "Sids" from the 4.5 million small private shareholders who were allocated

stock in the 1986 privatisation, publicised by the "Tell Sid" advertising campaign.

Shareholders already have some idea of how the market rates their stock from last week's dealings on the grey market. Shares in Centrica began trading last week at a surprisingly high 60p before rising further to close at 75.5p on Friday.

Shares in BG, which is made up of TransCo, the pipeline business, oil and gas exploration and production (although not the giant Morecambe Bay gasfield, which has gone in to Centrica), ended the week at 170.5p. The market had initially expected a value of 150p, although estimates range up to 220p. Added

market interest and bid rumours suggest a bright start for shares of supply business

together, the demerged BG and Centrica shares were worth 246p on Friday, almost matching the 247.5p at which the old British Gas shares ended life.

The rise in Centrica shares suggested intense market interest and sparked rumours of a bid, remarkable given the £1 billion to £2 billion losses expected to be caused by problems from take-or-pay gas contracts. Centrica has unfortunately

inherited British Gas's expensive take-or-pay obligations to buy gas at a fixed price even when it can only sell the gas on at a much lower price.

Centrica's fortunes in the gas supply business depend on how effectively it can move into the competitive market. The old British Gas lost its industrial customers in large numbers, and it is hampered in the steadily unfolding domestic competi-

tive market by not being able to offer competitive tariffs. It is in talks with the regulator to introduce a fresh range of charges for competitive areas.

Nonetheless Centrica could still be a prime bid candidate for an oil company looking to enter the domestic market.

Arthur Hepp at Credit Lyonnais Laing, the broker, said: "Centrica has already said it will not be paying a dividend and, whatever the outcome, BG will be forced to cut its dividend before too long. There is likely to be some confusion among private investors, but hopefully, most investors who wanted to get out of British Gas have already done so."

Centrica's launch onto the stock market will be followed on Friday by The Energy Group's first steps to independence from Hanson. An extraordinary meeting will ask shareholders of Hanson, which has been progressively splitting itself into four companies, to sanction the spin-off of The Energy Group, which comprises Eastern Electricity and Peabody Coal of the US.

With approval, The Energy Group will start trading on Monday. For Eastern, the United Kingdom's largest regional electricity company, the move will be a return to the stock market after nearly two years' absence after the purchase by Hanson in 1995.

Deal 'worth £625bn in global trade'

Telecoms pact signals end of monopolies

By OLIVER AUGUST

AN international agreement to deregulate telecommunications markets could add \$1 trillion (£625 billion), or 4 per cent, to the value of global economic output over the next decade, according to the World Trade Organisation.

The pact, signed by 68 countries at the weekend, will end most major government and private monopolies and comes after three years of complex inter-governmental negotiations.

The most immediate benefit will be to international investors, who are guaranteed that, from 1998 when the agreement comes into force, changes in national governments will not result in changed telecommunications regulations.

But consumers should be the ultimate beneficiaries. The World Trade Organisation, which supervised the Geneva negotiations, predicted the agreement would result in the creation of thousands of jobs and reduce phone costs.

Renato Ruggiero, director-general of the WTO, said:

"This is good news for the international economy. It is good news for businesses, and it is good news for the ordinary people around the world who use telephones or who want to use them."

The agreement does not consist of a single treaty signed by all participants. Instead, the 68 countries submitted individual offers of how they propose to deregulate their own markets. A deal was struck when all offers were accepted by all participating governments. Britain and other EU countries represented by Brussels.

Negotiations went right to the wire when the United States held out until the Saturday night deadline to get further concessions. It had leant hard on Canada and Japan to allow a higher level of foreign ownership of media companies.

A breakthrough in the dying hours secured the first agreement that puts one of the world's major service industries almost fully under the

open-trade rules of the two-year-old WTO.

The United States had been under considerable pressure not to walk away from a deal for a second time after a failed attempt last April. American telecommunications companies had also lobbied for the pact.

A separate accord to remove tariffs on individual media products, reached at the WTO's first ministerial meeting in Singapore in December, is to be finalised next month.

For most companies around the world, telecommunications costs come only second to labour costs on the debit side of their balance sheets, economists said.

Ian Taylor, the Science and Technology Minister, said in Geneva that the landmark pact would open up most of the world's £375 billion telecommunications market. "Some analysts have predicted a further one-trillion-dollar additional world trade over the next ten to 15 years, £20 billion worth in telecoms for the UK alone," the minister said.

Britain, along with the other 14 EU countries, the second-biggest global market with a 23.5 per cent share, committed itself to completing the liberalisation of basic telecommunications services, including satellite networks and all mobile and personal communications services by 2003.

America, the world leader, committed itself to open markets essentially for all services for all market segments — local, long-distance and international — and unrestricted access to common carrier radio licences for operators that are indirectly foreign-owned.

Charlene Barshefsky, the US trade representative, said: "A 60-year tradition of telecommunications monopolies and closed markets has been replaced by market opening, deregulation and competition. Before this agreement, only 17 per cent of the top 20 telecom markets were open to US companies; now they have access to nearly 100 per cent of these markets."



Roy Franklin, managing director of Clyde, predicts a bright future without Gulf

Clyde bid heads for nail-biting finish

By GEORGE SIVELL

THE fierce £500 million bid battle for Clyde Petroleum is heading for a close finish tomorrow lunchtime when the deadline for shareholders to accept the 120p a share cash bid from Gulf Canada Resources expires.

One adviser said: "We will

be bringing our nails right up to the deadline." Gulf Canada has a stake of 29 per cent in Clyde after buying up the 14.9 per cent stake held by PDMF, the fund management group. The outcome could depend on Schroders, the investment

Shorts to create more than 1,000 jobs

By OLIVER AUGUST

IN a spectacular boost to the economy in Northern Ireland, Shorts, the aircraft builder, is expected to create more than 1,000 jobs in Belfast this week.

A source close to the company said the job losses resulting from the collapse of Fokker, the Dutch group, last year will be more than offset. He said: "This will be a huge step forward for the company and a pretty rare bit of good news for the region." The official announcement will be made on Wednesday.

The jobs are the result of new work on the 70-seat Canadair Regional Jet (RJ-X), commissioned by Bombardier, parent company of Shorts. The RJ-X is a stretched version of the 50-seat Regional Jet. Shorts will manufacture parts of the wings, the fuselage and the engine nacelle.

The RJ-X is the 10th Bombardier programme in which Shorts is playing a major role. The new programme is particularly welcome after the loss of 1,000 jobs following the collapse of Fokker, which provided the company with 25 per cent of its aircraft work.

Bombardier estimates demand of 2,000 for this type of aircraft over the next ten to 15 years and hopes to capture 20 per cent of the market.

This week could also see a Ministry of Defence announcement on the procurement of the Future Large Aircraft (FLA) manufactured by Airbus, the consortium that includes British Aerospace. An MoD spokesman said: "A decision will be announced very, very shortly."

Windfall for directors in £900m Eversholt sale

By MARTIN BARROW

EVERSHOLT, the privatised train leasing firm, is expected to be sold for around £900 million this week. The deal will secure a huge profit for the City investors and former British Rail managers who paid just £50 million for the business one year ago.

The transaction will make multi-millionaires of Eversholt's senior directors, who are expected to share a windfall of up to £60 million. They include Andrew Jukes, managing director, who could receive up to £20 million, after an original investment of £100,000.

Colin Haggard, finance director, and Roger Aylward, engineering director, will each receive between £10 million and £15 million. Peter Harper, non-executive chairman, is in line for £4 million. Some 90

per cent of Eversholt's 70 managers and staff, including the directors, own 15 per cent of it.

The main City backers, Can-Am and Electra Fleming, could make profits of £165 million

lion each. Other institutions, including BZW, Cartmore and Advent, will make more than £150 million each.

Eversholt's buyer is thought to be Forward Trust, leasing arm of Midland Bank. Talks continued at the weekend.

The sale will revive dispute over prices secured by the Government in privatising British Rail. Last year, Porterbrook, another train leasing company, was sold to Stagecoach, the bus group, for £825 million, a £300 million gain in seven months. Sandy Anderson, Porterbrook managing director, made £23 million.

■ National Express has been

chosen to run Central Trains, its fifth rail franchise. Central

is focused on urban populations and commuter journeys in and around Birmingham.

■ The sale could also see a

Ministry of Defence

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■ The Times (1997) £1.125 (1996 £1.00). The Times Crossword Books 2, 200, 210, 220, 230, 240, 250, 260, 270, 280, 290, 300, 310, 320, 330, 340, 350, 360, 370, 380, 390, 400, 410, 420, 430, 440, 450, 460, 470, 480, 490, 500, 510, 520, 530, 540, 550, 560, 570, 580, 590, 600, 610, 620, 630, 640, 650, 660, 670, 680, 690, 700, 710, 720, 730, 740, 750, 760, 770, 780, 790, 800, 810, 820, 830, 840, 850, 860, 870, 880, 890, 900, 910, 920, 930, 940, 950, 960, 970, 980, 990, 1000, 1010, 1020, 1030, 1040, 1050, 1060, 1070, 1080, 1090, 1100, 1110, 1120, 1130, 1140, 1150, 1160, 1170, 1180, 1190, 1200, 1210, 1220, 1230, 1240, 1250, 1260, 1270, 1280, 1290, 1300, 1310, 1320, 1330, 1340, 1350, 1360, 1370, 1380, 1390, 1400, 1410, 1420, 1430, 1440, 1450, 1460, 1470, 1480, 1490, 1500, 1510, 1520, 1530, 1540, 1550, 1560, 1570, 1580, 1590, 1600, 1610, 1620, 1630, 1640, 1650, 1660, 1670, 1680, 1690, 1700, 1710, 1720, 1730, 1740, 1750, 1760, 1770, 1780, 1790, 1800, 1810, 1820, 1830, 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020, 2030, 2040, 2050, 2060, 2070, 2080, 2090, 2100, 2110, 2120, 2130, 2140, 2150, 2160, 2170, 2180, 2190, 2200, 2210, 2220, 2230, 2240, 2250, 2260, 2270, 2280, 2290, 2300, 2310, 2320, 2330, 2340, 2350, 2360, 2370, 2380, 2390, 2400, 2410, 2420, 2430, 2440, 2450, 2460, 2470, 2480, 2490, 2500, 2510, 2520, 2530, 2540, 2550, 2560, 2570, 2580, 2590, 2600, 2610, 2620, 2630, 2640, 2650, 2660, 2670, 2680, 2690, 2700, 2710, 2720, 2730, 2740, 2750, 2760, 2770, 2780, 2790, 2800, 2810, 2820, 2830, 2840, 2850, 2860, 2870, 2880, 2890, 2900, 2910, 2920, 2930, 2940, 2950, 2960, 2970, 2980, 2990, 3000, 3010, 3020, 3030, 3040, 3050, 3060, 3070, 3080, 3090, 3100, 3110, 3120, 3130, 3140, 3150, 3160, 3170, 3180, 3190, 3200, 3210, 3220, 3230, 3240, 3250, 3260, 3270, 3280, 3290, 3300, 3310, 3320, 3330, 3340, 3350, 3360, 3370, 3380, 3390, 3400, 3410, 3420, 3430, 3440, 3450, 3460, 3470, 3480, 3490, 3500, 3510, 3520, 3530, 3540, 3550, 3560, 3570, 3580, 3590, 3600, 3610, 3620, 3630, 3640, 3650, 3660, 3670, 3680, 3690, 3700, 3710, 3720, 3730, 3740, 3750, 3760, 3770, 3780, 3790, 3800, 3810, 3820, 3830, 3840, 3850, 3860, 3870, 3880, 3890, 3900, 3910, 3920, 3930, 3940, 3950, 3960, 3970, 3980, 3990, 4000, 4010, 4020, 4030, 4040, 4050, 4060, 4070, 4080, 4090, 4100, 4110, 4120, 4130, 4140, 4150, 4160, 4170, 4180, 4190, 4200, 4210, 4220, 4230, 4240, 4250, 4260, 4270, 4280, 4290, 4300, 4310, 4320, 4330, 4340, 4350, 4360, 4370, 4380, 4390, 4400, 4410, 4420, 4430, 4440, 4450, 4460, 4470, 4480, 4490, 4500, 4510, 4520, 4530, 4540, 4550, 4560, 4570, 4580, 4590, 4600, 4610, 4620, 4630, 4640, 4650, 4660, 4670, 4680,